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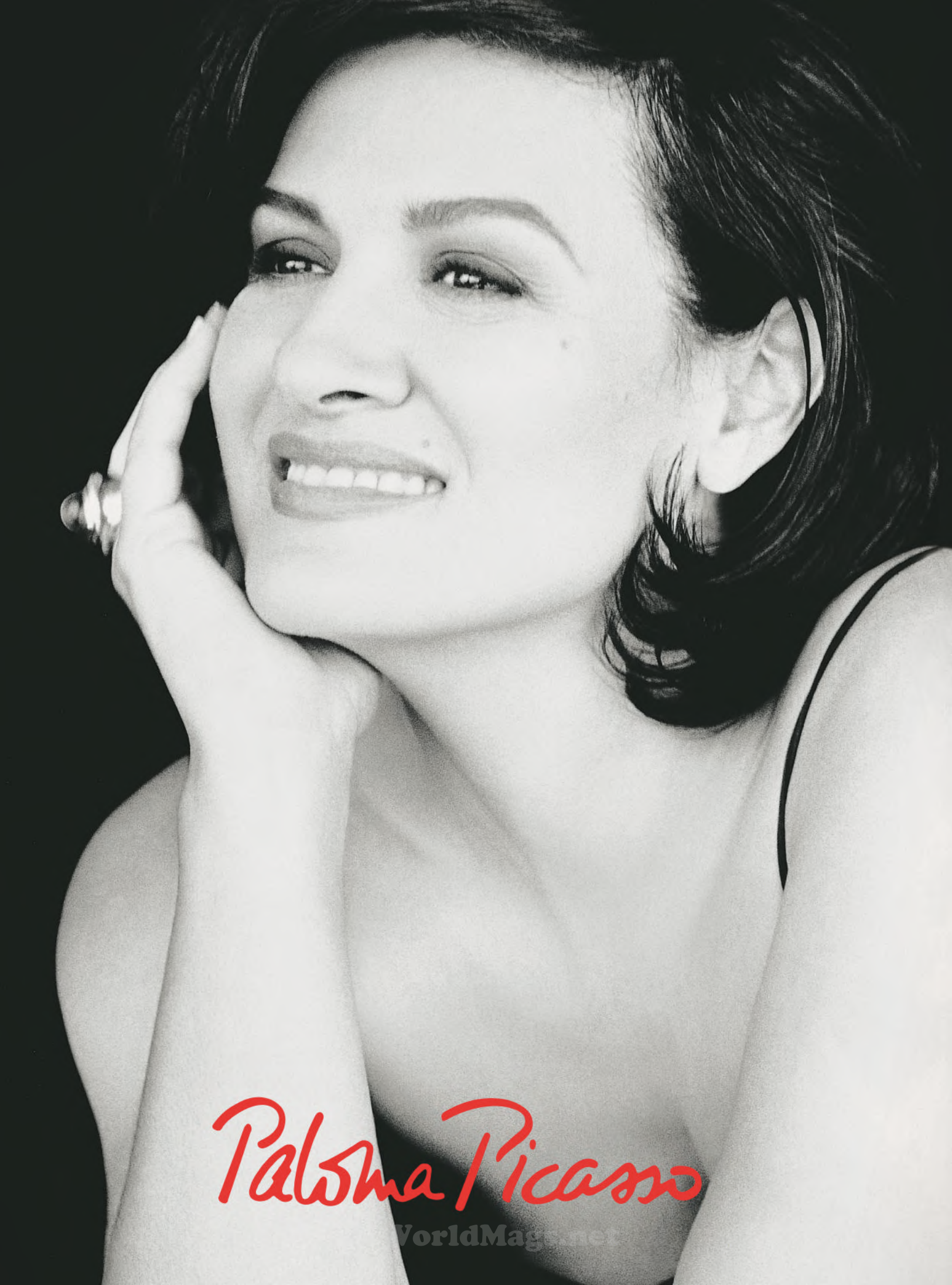
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ON THE COVER

Photograph **Brian Bowen Smith**

Hair **Gio Campora**

Make-up **Matthew VanLeeuwen**

Styling **Tanya Gill**

Wrap **St. John Shirt Thomas Wylde**

Earrings **Vhernier**

BELOW LEFT: Coat **Vince**

Necklace **Vhernier** Earrings **Tacori**

TRIED & TESTED

Your trust is important to us, which is why:

Every recipe is tested three times in the GHI kitchens.

Every product test bearing the GHI logo is carried out to the strict standards laid down by the Good Housekeeping Institute, our leading research centre.

Recommendations on our editorial pages are based on the impartial advice of our editors and expert contributors.

All health articles are checked for accuracy by the Good Housekeeping Health Watch team of health professionals.

All prices are correct at time of going to press.

GET IN TOUCH WITH US!

We aim to correct significant inaccuracies in the next available issue. If you would like to get in touch, please email us at goodh.mail@hearst.co.uk



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Welcome



Good Housekeeping's editor, Lindsay, on what she's loving right now...

Our own New Year's honours

For the past 13 years, Good Housekeeping has been proud to be a sponsor of The Women of the Year Awards. And by that I mean THE Women of the Year Awards – the ones that count, not the wannabees. Sixty years ago, Lady Tony Lothian came up with the idea of an annual lunch at which pioneering women from all walks of life could meet and network. The idea took hold and now, every October, 450 inspiring women gather to chat, to celebrate and to honour those whose contributions in the past year have been especially outstanding. The current President of Women of the Year is our own Sandi Toksvig – not only a brilliant writer and performer, but now the founder of a brand new political movement, the Women's Equality Party... and about time, too. Sandi has also been announced as the new host of QI, making her the first female presenter of a mainstream comedy programme. Yes, it has taken until 2016 for TV to acknowledge that women can be funny and commanding. We've come a long way baby, but we still have some way to go...

One of my guilty pleasures at the Women Of The Year lunch is seeing what everyone wears. This year, guest presenter Nicole Kidman looked fabulous in Victorian lace ruffles; Bake Off winner Nadiya Hussain offset her navy hijab with aquamarine heels. Mary Beard rocked a bright yellow jacket and I am always envious of the military women in their smart uniforms. At least they don't have to worry about what to wear! Inspired by this month's feature on work uniforms, I wore the same outfit as last year. If anyone remembered, they were too polite to say – but I don't think anyone did.

If the Women of the Year Lunch is a highlight of the GH calendar, then the release of the new Star Wars film comes a close second. I wouldn't class myself as a sci-fi fan, but we feel as if we've grown up with these characters and want to find out what happens next, especially to Princess Leia. For a special insight, our Deputy Editor, Michelle, flew to Los Angeles to interview Carrie Fisher in her own home. She went bearing gifts – Fortnum & Mason tea for Anglophile Carrie, and a Union Jack bandana for the actress's beloved dog, Gary – and wasn't sure who was more delighted!

Wishing you all a peaceful and prosperous New Year,

Lindsay Nicholson

Follow me on Twitter [@LindsNich](#)



Girls allowed: Rotherham whistleblower Jayne Senior, above, and Bake Off's Nadiya Hussain, with Lindsay, below



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Warm welcome: applause from the 450 women present greeted Sandi as current president of WOYLA



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*Based on mass-market facial moisturiser and cleanser value sales for the past 12 months ending December 2014


Olay
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WORTH SHARING

write or email
FACEBOOK OR TWEET...

Q *What item should every woman have in her wardrobe?*

A ★ A statement pair of shoes and a matching handbag – fabulous!

Diana Adams

★ Good-quality jeans in a style that suits your figure.

Rosalyn Rusted

★ Definitely a leather jacket.

Sophie Watkins

★ Something that makes you feel gorgeous and confident every day.

Jackie Johnson

★ A classic, stylish fitted coat.

Laura Betty

★ A cashmere scarf. Mine is so warm and soft, and complements any outfit I wear.

Ann Taylor

★ Well-cut black linen trousers that you can dress up or down. They're even more versatile than the little black dress!

Hazel Rea

★ A classic black blazer looks fab at work or out on the town.

Tiffany Crawford

★ An oversized white shirt – an absolute staple in any woman's wardrobe.

Jodi Hill

★ I love my wedge boots... I wear them all year round.

Natalie Gibbings

★ A Breton top – or five!

Hayley Aldis

★ Black stilettos – sleek, sexy and elegant with every outfit.

Frances Heaton

★ I love a black roll-neck jumper. Timeless, chic and endlessly adaptable.

Jo Haigh

★ My leather biker jacket – I love it!

Katie

Brilliant basics:
a Breton top and
denim jeans



★ STAR EMAIL

I was so pleased when I opened my December issue to find a lovely image of an attractive lady in a wheelchair modelling beautiful clothes in a fashion feature. Thanks for making me, and I'm sure many others, feel that, disabled or not, we fit into all aspects of normal life, including the latest fashions.
Julie Gumbs



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JANUARY 2016 GOOD HOUSEKEEPING 9

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OUTFIT UPDATE

Necklace, £49, Coast
(coast-stores.com)



BEAUTIFUL AND USEFUL

Biba Optic jug, £30,
House of Fraser



DARK AND DELICIOUS

Costa Rican dark chocolate
coated coffee beans, £4 for
150g, Marks & Spencer

Your time to shine

You've bought and wrapped the presents, prepared a feast and blinged up the house... Now treat yourself and get ready to party!



MAKE AN ENTRANCE

Adrianna Papell dress, £210,
8-18, House of Fraser



SERVE UP A STATEMENT

Tom Dixon sugar dish and
spoon, £60, John Lewis



RETRO SET

Biba Deco Peacock
dinnerware, from £10 for a
side plate, House of Fraser



STAR QUALITY

Earrings, £15, White Stuff
(whitestuff.com)

FABULOUS FIZZ

Lanson White Label NV
Champagne, £34.99,
Waitrose



PRECIOUS METALS

Pinch pot set, £45, Oliver
Bonas (oliverbonas.com)

SILVERY GLOW
Table lamp, £80, Debenhams

MODERN EDGE
Rebel by Waterford bottle opener, £30, John Lewis

IT'S A WRAP
Sequinned scarf, £28, Nine by Savannah at Debenhams

EVERY STEP YOU TAKE...
Courts, £125, 3-9, Ted Baker (tedbaker.co.uk)

SLICE OF STYLE
Biba Odette cake slice, £16, House of Fraser

FLASH OF LIGHT
Cuff earrings, £15, Marks & Spencer

ALL THAT GLITTERS
Bag, £125, Lulu Guinness (luluguinness.com)

SPICE IT UP
Tory Burch Absolu, £91, Debenhams

PEAR NECESSITY
Trinket pot, £18, Oliver Bonas (oliverbonas.com)

SUBTLE SHEEN
Ralph Lauren cross-body bag, £165, House of Fraser

SWEET DREAMS
Sequin cushion, £12, Very (very.co.uk)

JUST MY TYPE
Gold-plated alphabet pendant, £75, Liberty (liberty.co.uk) ■

COMPILED BY: GRACE ALLEN, JO ATKINSON, GILLIAN DAVIES, MADELINE BURKITT

Empowering, inspiring, **WOMEN** of

So many **AMAZING WOMEN**, so many inspiring stories! The glittering Women of the Year Lunch and Awards makes **GH** proud to be a sponsor. This year, **HOLLYWOOD GLAMOUR** mixed with **TV AND THEATRE** royalty – but it was the **AWARD WINNERS** who deserved the red carpet more than anyone...

It was GH columnist Sandi Toksvig who said it all: 'It is the best afternoon of laughter and tears that I have ever been to. I would love to show this room to every schoolgirl growing up in Britain today and tell them: you can be whatever you want to be, just look around you!'

And what a sight it was. There were 450 women – from barristers to charity workers, nurses, Olympians, a cheesemaker and several air squadron leaders. Not to mention Hollywood actress Nicole Kidman, Bake Off winner Nadiya Hussain and Libby Lane, Britain's first woman bishop.

For 60 years, the Women of the Year Lunch and Awards has been bringing together awe-inspiring women who have changed the lives of others, along with famous faces who use their celebrity to help those who don't have a voice. This year was host Sandi Toksvig's first as President. 'No problem, I am a woman,' she said. 'I can multi-task, so watch and marvel!'

To mark the 60th lunch, a special

award was made to philanthropist and businesswoman Dame Stephanie Shirley in recognition of all she's done to pave the way for changes that many working women now take for granted. There was laughter as it was revealed that she only employed women in her IT company until the Equal Opportunities Act meant she had to take on men, too.

It's stories such as this that make GH proud to play a part and raise a glass to toast heroines from all walks of life who aren't afraid to break boundaries and fight for change. As Editorial Director Lindsay Nicholson said: 'It's the best day of the year. So many inspiring, passionate, interesting women together in one place – what could be better?'

Actress Nicole, who brought along her mum, agreed. 'I loved it,' she said. 'I felt honoured to be invited.'

Every award prompted a standing ovation from all 450 women, and we're certain they'll inspire you, too. So let's hear it for this year's award winners...



Empowering women:
Lindsay Nicholson with
GH's Sandi Toksvig



Standing tall: Nicole Kidman
impressed with her name
badge that read simply 'actress'



Banging the drum:
women to be reckoned with



'This lunch is special. It
recognises women from
all walks of life,' said
Baroness Doreen Lawrence



Name of the dame:
Esther Rantzen
proudly wore
her DBE honour

uplifting...

the YEAR



'It has been a humbling experience,' said Squadron Leader Charlotte Thompson-Edgar



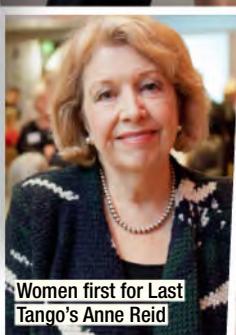
FROM LEFT: Sandi Toksvig, Mary Nightingale, Lorraine Kelly, Bake Off winner Nadiya Hussain and Lindsay Nicholson



Brightest stars: Nicole Kidman with GH's Lindsay Nicholson and scientist Baroness Jocelyn Bell Burnell



'You can feel the buzz in the room,' said actress Sally Lindsay



Women first for Last Tango's Anne Reid



Bosom buddies: Coppafeel's Kristin Hallenga (right) with her twin, Maren, and friend, Laura Gallagher



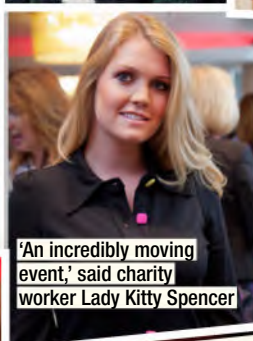
Wahaca founder Thomasina Miers (right) and travel entrepreneur Emily Fitzroy



Coming up roses: Baroness Tessa Jowell



GH's favourite queen of clean, Aggie Mackenzie



'An incredibly moving event,' said charity worker Lady Kitty Spencer



'The best thing about the lunch is the human menu - it's a minestrone of talent,' said Kathy Lette, here with Baroness Jocelyn Bell Burnell



Black tie affair: singer Katie Melua



High fliers: Air Vice-Marshal Elaine West with former WAAF officer Eileen Househusband and Wing Commander Nikki Thomas



Breaking stained glass ceilings: Britain's first woman bishop, Libby Lane



Woman of many talents: actress and writer Meera Syal



'It's great to meet lots of successful women being women,' said Mary Beard, here with GH's Lindsay Nicholson



'I love hearing stories of amazing women,' said Jo Brand



'We've come so far since the first lunch and there's still more to do,' said Peer Floella Benjamin



'So many women here inspire you to try harder and go further,' said ITV's Julie Etchingham

GH OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

JAYNE SENIOR

Saving children from sexual exploitation

For 16 years, youth-charity manager Jayne Senior fought to protect vulnerable girls in Rotherham – as the council, police and social services turned a blind eye.

Talking with young people in the early 1990s, Jayne found a pattern of worrying stories emerging.

She realised girls as young as 10 were being groomed by men – mostly of Pakistani origin – who made them feel special by taking them out, giving them gifts and winning their trust.

‘They’d find out everything – where the girls lived, their parents’ names and jobs – but the girls knew nothing about them beyond their nickname,’ Jayne explains. Soon, threats would start: If you don’t have sex with me, I’ll firebomb your house. If you refuse to have sex with my friends, we’ll shoot your dad.

Jayne was often the first person who’d listen. ‘If a child is screaming furiously at you to leave them alone, you have to see beyond that anger to the terrified girl who’s scared that, if she tells you what’s been happening, her mum will be killed,’ she says.

Yet, because the girls enjoyed the attention initially, the authorities were prepared to ignore the exploitation, claiming the girls had consented and made a choice.

‘That makes me so angry,’ says Jayne. ‘There’s no other form of abuse – like violence, for example – that we’d allow children to tell us they’re consenting to.’

In the face of indifferent authorities, Jayne refused to back down. Eventually, her only option was to take the story to the press. At last, Rotherham came under the spotlight, and an independent report, followed by a parliamentary hearing, accepted her evidence that at least 1,400 girls had been exploited. Police, council and child protection chiefs resigned, and the National Crime Agency is now investigating.

‘Over the years I’ve been accused of lying, exaggerating and even threatened with prison – but at last I felt exonerated,’ says Jayne.

‘I’m not a hero. I did this because I couldn’t walk away. What I’ve done is give those 1,400 young people a voice, so what happened to them won’t happen to anyone else’s children.’



‘I did this because I couldn’t walk away’

JAYNE SENIOR



‘It’s vital for girls to have mentors and role models to encourage them’

DAME JOCELYN BELL BURNELL

PRUDENTIAL LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

DAME JOCELYN BELL BURNELL

Inspiring girls to achieve in science

Despite a hugely successful and influential career as an astrophysicist, Dame Jocelyn Bell Burnell was once overlooked for her ground-breaking work – while her male colleagues won a Nobel Prize. She believes it’s essential to encourage young women to believe that science can be a career for them.

‘My history in science is pretty horrendous,’ admits Dame Jocelyn. ‘At school, I had to fight to be allowed to study science, rather than domestic science. At Cambridge I suffered from imposter syndrome, where you think you aren’t bright enough to succeed and they’ll be chucking you out soon. Then, as a wife and mother, I had to put my career on hold – though it’s turned out well in the end.’

Currently a visiting Professor of Astrophysics at Mansfield College, Oxford, one of Dame Jocelyn’s most extraordinary discoveries was while she was still a PhD student. She spent two years as part of a team building a huge radio telescope in a field, hoping to identify signals from deep space. But her research yielded a strange, regular radio signal, and she joked at first that it was LGM – little green men.

Eventually, she was able to prove the signals were coming from a then unknown type of star – spinning neutrons, which were to become known as pulsars.

Although the 1974 Nobel Prize in Physics for the discovery later went to her male supervisor, Dame Jocelyn’s achievement has always been acknowledged by her peers and the scientific establishment.

‘I’ve always been the “most senior” and “only” woman throughout my career,’ she says.

‘It’s vital for girls to have role models and mentors. We also have to work with parents, so that if a girl goes home saying “I want a career in science” she doesn’t get asked: why?’



DFS OUTSTANDING YOUNG CAMPAIGNER

KRISTIN HALLENGA

Saving lives by encouraging young women to check their breasts

Fourteen months after she first visited her GP about a lump in her breast, Kristin Hallenga was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer. She was 23. Within weeks, Kris and her twin sister, Maren, launched Coppafeel, a charity to inform young women about the signs of breast cancer and encourage them to check themselves regularly.

'When I heard those three words: "You have cancer", my world changed for ever,' Kris says. 'The hardest thing was telling Maren.'

A week later, there was even worse news. Her cancer had already spread to her spine. The prognosis changed from 'We can cure this', to 'We can treat this'.

'Cancer can affect you at any time, and I immediately wondered why no one was warning young women about it,' says Kris.

'I decided I wanted my story out there, so Maren and I started campaigning. The day I woke up from a mastectomy, Maren told me our organisation, Coppafeel, had been given charity status.'

Kris and Maren have since reached a million women with their breast-checking message, through visiting festivals like Wireless and Wilderness, sending 100,000 email breast-check reminders every month, distributing shower stickers, and through their own festival, Festifeel, curated by DJ patron Fearnie Cotton. They're also working with 60 universities, and celebs like Sheridan Smith and Nicole Scherzinger have supported their work.

'I'm ambitious,' says Kris. 'My vision is to ensure that every young person holds the key to understanding what's going on with their breasts, knows what "normal" should feel like, and feels empowered to go to their GP.'

She believes cancer education needs to start earlier, too. 'You're never too young to learn this stuff, so we're working on a pilot for education in schools.'

Kris's cancer has spread to her spine, pelvis, hips, liver and brain.

'I'll never know if it could have been cured if I'd been diagnosed earlier. But that's never going to change. So I enjoy every milestone – like my birthday – as if it's my last.

'I'm now 29, and at the moment my cancer is stable. Aggressive treatment has kept me alive, and I now have a hormone treatment once a month. I know the drugs could stop working at any time. But until then, I have so much I want to achieve.'

'I wanted my story out there to warn others'

KRISTIN HALLENGA



GH INSPIRING READER

MARGO WHITEFORD

A doctor working for the disabled

We asked GH readers to nominate a candidate to win an invitation to the Lunch, and were overwhelmed by the achievements of the wonderful women you told us about. Our winner, Margo Whiteford, was nominated by her mother, Mae. Margo was born with spina bifida and went on to train as a paediatrician – she is now a consultant clinical geneticist. 'I like to think that having been a patient myself has made me more sympathetic as a doctor,' says Margo.

As well as her hospital work in Scotland, Margo travels around the world, speaking at conferences and lobbying governments to create a better future for children with disabilities.

'I've spent a lot of time in developing countries, where disability is often seen as a punishment. I hope to help parents realise their children can make something of their lives,' says Margo, who matched her wheelchair to her outfit for the event.

She also fundraises to ensure essential medical equipment reaches children in the greatest need, in countries like Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan and Tanzania. 'Shunts to drain fluid from the brain can save the lives of children with hydrocephalus,' she explains. 'And catheters to get back in control of continence mean they can become socially acceptable and go to school.'

Closer to home, she is campaigning for the Government to make folic acid a requirement in staple foods, as it's known to prevent spina bifida – but only when taken two to three months before conception.

'I'm delighted to have been invited to the Lunch,' says Margo, who is chairperson of Spina Bifida Hydrocephalus Scotland, and President of the International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus.

She's had celebrity help from chef Gordon Ramsay, who became a patron after meeting Margo in 2002. 'He encouraged me to do the London Marathon in a racing wheelchair in 2009 – on my 50th birthday,' she says.



'I hope my work shows parents their children can succeed'

MARGO WHITEFORD

BARCLAYS AWARD

COKIE VAN DER VELDE

Working at the heart of the Ebola crisis

She's a grandmother who is also an expert water and sanitation engineer – and Cokie van der Velde's work has taken her to the most dangerous places in the world to battle Ebola and other diseases.

'When you arrive in an emergency situation there is so much to do. You see the terrible need and are driven forward to try to keep everyone safe from infection,' Cokie says.

During missions to Guinea and Liberia with Médecins sans Frontières and other agencies, she has established supplies of safe, clean water, built latrines and ensured hygiene is maintained in an attempt to stop the spread of deadly viruses.

She's had to cope with heartbreaking situations, especially in Liberia, where the 2014 outbreak of Ebola caused so many deaths that 80-100 bodies a day were waiting to be cremated. As a non-medic, she wouldn't normally expect to deal with the dead, but because of the sheer numbers, it became a vital part of her role to

collect corpses and disinfect homes.

Those who die of Ebola are even more infectious than the living, so a traditional washing and burial was not possible. 'People were very upset about that because they didn't feel they had said goodbye,' says Cokie.

'Ebola spares no one, but women paid an especially high price, as they were usually the carers of the sick, which meant they were much more likely to contract the disease from physical contact.' Cokie had to take children from sick mothers – only to see the babies become infected and die soon afterwards.

As a grandmother, she can't help but relate to what she's seen – and, of course, there's always the fear that she could contract the disease herself. 'I've taken my temperature ten times a night before now. But I do this because I'd like to see a fairer world, with equality in medical aid. Wherever I'm needed, I'll go.

'This award is for all my colleagues in dangerous places, and those who ensure vital equipment reaches us.'



'Women have been hit hardest by this disease'

COKIE VAN DER VELDE

'My son would be so proud of me'

PAT ROGERS



ITV INSPIRATIONAL WOMAN

PAT ROGERS *Educating young people about the dangers of drunken violence*

Trying to act as a peacemaker in a street fight, Pat Rogers' son was killed. The senseless nature of his loss led her to set up the charity Every Action Has Consequences to highlight the dangers of drink-fuelled violence. She was chosen by viewers of ITV's Lorraine programme to win the award.

The nightmare began for Pat when her son, Adam, was knocked out by a single punch as he tried to break up a fight in Blackburn town centre in 2009. The 24-year-old sports coach suffered fatal head injuries, and his life support machine was turned off the next day.

When Pat discovered the 16-year-old who had hit her son had been very drunk, she decided to do something to ensure other families didn't suffer the same loss from an act of senseless

violence. Her charity aims to educate youngsters about the futility of street violence and binge drinking. Pat has produced an education package that has been seen by more than 500,000 young people so far, and she works closely with schools, prisons and youth clubs to tell Adam's story.

'I am so proud that the work we are doing is being recognised, and this award will mean even more people will find out about it,' she said.

'I think my son would very proud. He would probably have a wry smile on his face if he knew about all the attention. But all the work we do is for Adam and his memory, so I think he would be smiling down on me.'



'Every one of these women is a winner, they have all made a difference,' said Lorraine Kelly

INTERVIEWS: JANE KEMP; ADDITIONAL REPORTING: JACKIE BROWN. PHOTOGRAPHY: CHARLOTTE MEDICOTT. SOFA: SWEETPEA & WILLOW

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If my **Life** *wasn't funny...*

More than 35 years after starring as our favourite-ever girl crush, Carrie Fisher is back to play an older Princess Leia in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*. In a Good Housekeeping exclusive, she invited us to her Hollywood home for a frank and open-hearted discussion about her looks, her family, her relationship with her parents and the surprising new love of her life...

PHOTOGRAPHY **BRIAN BOWEN SMITH** FEATURE **MICHELLE HATHER**



'Princess Leia is as much me as I am her'

***It's easy** to know you've arrived at Carrie Fisher's house – there's a British telephone box with a life-size model of Princess Leia peeking out of it. Inside, the house is crammed with mementoes of her amazing life – and a Christmas tree she keeps lit all year round. In the flesh, she is smaller, prettier and constantly making wisecracks, yet willing to speak with brutal honesty about the ups and downs of her career. With her beloved dog, Gary, by her side, Carrie is still a force to be reckoned with...*

WorldMags.net

A full-length portrait of Carrie Fisher standing against a solid blue background. She is wearing a long, white, belted coat over a light-colored top, dark blue pants, and shiny brown loafers. She has a large, ornate necklace and a brooch on her lapel. Her right hand is on her hip, and her left hand is in her coat pocket.

...it would only be
true

‘If I am
who my dog
thinks I am,
then I’m
fantastic!’

CARRIE FISHER



From Hollywood royalty to STAR WARS PRINCESS



1956 Carrie is born in Beverly Hills to actress Debbie Reynolds and singer Eddie Fisher
1958 Her parents divorce after Eddie leaves Debbie for her best friend, Elizabeth Taylor
1973 Carrie moves to

bikini) follow
1983 Carrie



marries (and later splits from) singer Paul Simon
1987 Her semi-autobiographical novel, *Postcards From The Edge*, is published, which tells the story of her drug addiction and her relationship with her mother
1989 Carrie plays Meg Ryan's best friend in *When Harry Met Sally*



London to study drama
1977 She is cast in an unknown film, *Star Wars*, with Mark Hamill and Harrison Ford. The *Empire Strikes Back* and *Return Of The Jedi* (in which she wears THAT metal

1989 Carrie plays Tom Hanks' wife in *The 'Burbs*
1990 She adapts her book to make a film of *Postcards* starring Meryl Streep and Shirley MacLaine
1992 After a relationship with casting agent Bryan Lourd, Carrie gives birth to a daughter, Billie. Later, Lourd would leave Carrie for another man
2006 Carrie appears with Stephen Fry in *The Secret Life Of The Manic Depressive*, in which she talks about living with bipolar disorder
2011 Her book *Shockaholic* reveals how her condition was treated with electro-convulsive therapy



2015 Carrie plays Rob's Mother in Channel 4's *Catastrophe*.
2015 Princess Leia, Luke Skywalker and Han Solo return in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* on 17 December.



Leia and Han are reunited

Congratulations on bringing back Princess Leia almost 40 years after you first played her. Why do you think everyone loves her so much? Because she doesn't take any nonsense from men! She bosses them around and treats them as if they are absurd, which I enjoy. She runs things, she's confident and she isn't aware of her appearance.

What does Leia look like in her 50s?

Me, which is so annoying.

Does she still have the same hair buns?

I have different styles, one of which looks like something from the original films. I am the worst at keeping secrets - I think in my mouth. I got into a lot of trouble in the beginning... I am dying to tell you but I can't!

It's been leaked that your daughter, Billie, is in the new film.

Can you talk about it?

People are expecting her to be me, to play a young Leia. But I already did that! Seeing her on the set of *Star Wars*, she was the most comfortable, confident... she belonged there, she was in her element. It's not about the acting, it's about drawing a kind of attention that is rare. It's star quality.

You must have been very proud of her!

Extremely, but I'm more amazed by her. I hope I can deserve her. She's stable - and that makes no sense! She's awesome. She's very confident and she knows her parents love her, and that makes her not need something from show business that she's not getting from life. It doesn't have the potential of having that dark power over you.

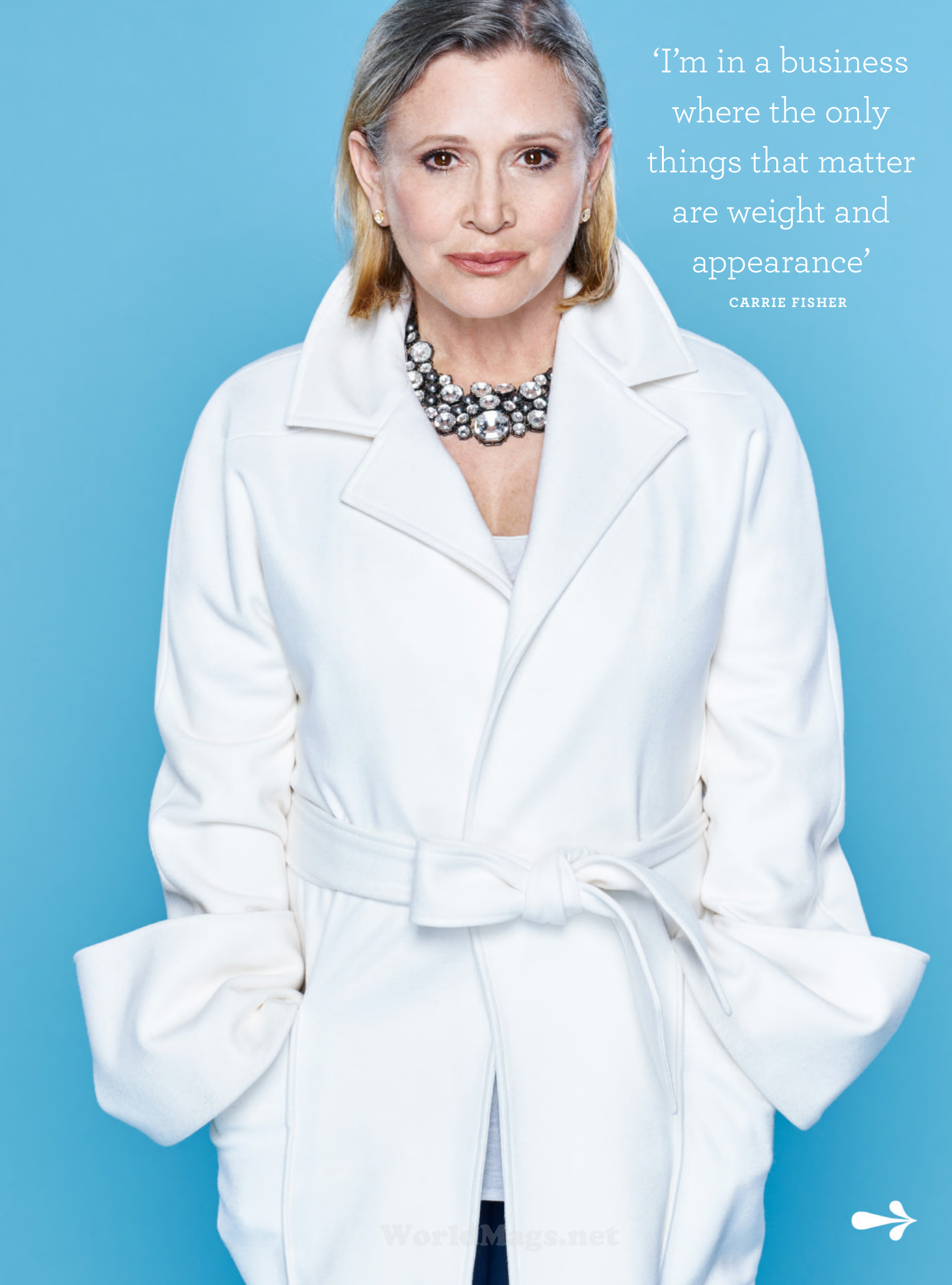
Given your experience, did you try to discourage Billie from becoming an actress?

Her father [casting agent Bryan Lourd] and I both tried, and she knew we didn't want her to be an actress so she didn't say anything. What's sweet about it is that basically Billie wants my life. She understood what gave me happiness, what put value into my life and what I had a good time doing. She understood that what's good about show business is the money and the travel and the opportunity to meet interesting people. But she also knows what's bad about it. I watched the careers of my parents [actress Debbie Reynolds and singer Eddie Fisher] on the wane and I was humiliated for them, terrified for them. I knew it hurt them and they pretended that it didn't. They wanted it back and I was devastated. I don't think that's glamorous, I think it's heartbreaking.

You were asked to lose weight to play Leia - not just this time, when you lost more than 35lb, but also back in 1977 when you were 19. How did you feel about that?

They don't want to hire all of me - only about three-quarters! Nothing changes, it's an appearance-driven thing. I'm in a business where the only thing that matters is weight and appearance. That is so messed up. They might as well say get younger, because that's how easy it is.

Unfortunately I am very self conscious about the weight, and

A portrait of actress Carrie Fisher against a solid blue background. She is wearing a white, belted coat with wide lapels and large, puffed sleeves. Underneath, she wears a dark necklace with large, clear, round stones. Her hair is blonde and styled in a shoulder-length cut. She is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression.

‘I’m in a business
where the only
things that matter
are weight and
appearance’

CARRIE FISHER



[CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE] when I do lose it I don't like that it makes me feel good about myself. I had to work hard to do it, and it's not who I am. My problem is they talk to me like an actress but I hear them like a writer. What am I going to do, sit and argue the point? It's like my friend Stephen Fry said, just take the money.

What is interesting is that in the couple of years when I was at my most fat I wrote my book, *Wishful Drinking*, and did my one-woman stage play. I didn't care about caring – I gave it up.

You are in shape now – how did you do it?

The same way everybody has to – don't eat and exercise more! There is no other way to do it. I have a harder time eating properly than I do exercising.

Did you have a trainer?

Yes... I could do that! It's easier for me to add an activity than to deny myself something. It's more positive and it's healthy. I never gave up Coca-Cola, though. They tried everything... So I increased the exercise to compensate.

Star Wars mania has put you back in the spotlight. How's that been?

Having my picture taken is in my top five list of things I don't like. I'm vain – I don't like my appearance. We treat beauty like an accomplishment and that is insane. Everyone in LA says 'Oh you look good', and you listen for them to say you've lost weight. It's never 'How are you?' or 'You seem happy!'

None of that. My favourite stupid thing to do is to go in front of a mirror, close my mouth in a way that it would never be normally, put my chin down a little bit and open my eyes wide so I don't blink and then say to myself that I look good! What am I thinking? It's not what I sell at the Carrie store! There is

a saying – choosing a mate for their appearance is like selecting a breakfast cereal for its colour!

Do you think the obsession with appearance is a showbiz thing? Would it have been easier if you'd had a different job?

Would I have had the same parents? Because if so, then nothing would have changed. I looked at my mother and said, Wow, she is gorgeous and I don't look like her, therefore I'm not pretty. And my father doesn't visit – I mustn't be pretty because he likes pretty women. It's not show business' fault, but if you are damaged like that, the best job you can go into is show business. You think, I'll go into show business because then I'll get enough love and they will put make-up on me properly and then my life will work. It pulls in the unstable people. I'm lucky, I didn't have to be pulled in, I was already there.

That poster of you in the metal bikini was on every schoolboy's wall... Didn't you know you were pretty?

I didn't. I was much more focused on my life. And what would it have done for me to know? It was only later when people said, 'I thought about you every day', that I realised people were fantasising about me.

Do you regret playing Leia?

Regret is a waste of time. Leia is as much me as I am her. The cutest thing I see is people bringing their children to Star Wars, like they are giving them a gift. It's deeper than it's meant to be. It's something I wanted to say to the new kids in Episode VII – you are going to be representing something that's important to people and you are going to help them interpret or enjoy that. It's quite a responsibility.

You've been a successful actress and author. What do you have planned next?

I'm very impressed with people who have a vast store of knowledge because it indicates they are interested in something other than themselves. My friend Ruby Wax went back to Oxford to study, and I would love to do that – read history, literature and poetry. I plan on living some of the time

in the UK. All my friends are British, which is weirdly embarrassing. The other thing I hope to do is a lot of computer dating.

Really?

No! Can you imagine? It would be really funny if I posted another picture with

another name and then showed up to a date. I'd have to say, 'Yes, people tell me I look like Carrie Fisher, I get that all the time!'

Would you like to get married again?

Yes, in theory, but it's very hard for women in show business. I don't want to make someone Mr Fisher. I would like a companion, but I'm not co-operative and I don't meet new people.

What is most important in your life?

My mother, my daughter, my dog Gary, my friends, travelling.

Why is Gary so important?

I have never liked an animal like this, and it's very inconvenient. Gary travels everywhere with me! Your animal makes you feel soothed and like you belong. I love that saying: make me become the person my animal thinks I am. If I am who Gary thinks I am, I'm fantastic!

You've had to forfeit your privacy to an extent. Has it helped you to talk about your mental health issues and the fact you had electric shock treatment?

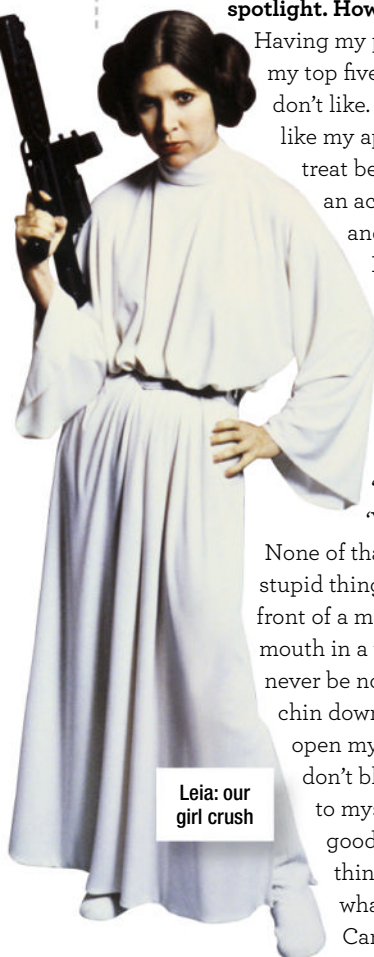
It is nice to have a private life and that I don't have one is down to me. But if you are only as sick as your secrets, then I am very well. The best thing I have is that I can turn things into anecdotes. If my life wasn't funny, it would only be true. A lot of people have thanked me for talking about being bipolar and having ECT. They tell me it has helped them, and that's nice.

You are writing *The Princess Diarist*, taken from the diaries you kept while making *Star Wars*. Was it strange rediscovering the Carrie of 1977?

I came across these journals that I had kept from the beginning and I sound just the same – very insecure, crazy town! I talk about patterns in my life... I'm 19! How can I have patterns? But I did. I was right. □

'My friend Stephen Fry said about Star Wars: just take the money'

CARRIE FISHER



Leia: our girl crush

HAIR: GIO CAMPORE AT THE WALL GROUP; MAKE-UP: MATTHEW VAN LEEUWEN AT STARWORKS; ARTISTS: STYLING: TANVA GILL @ THE ONLY AGENCY; CARRIE WEARS (OPENING SPREAD): COAT AND T-SHIRT: THOMAS WYLDE; LEGGINGS: WOLFORD; SHOES: ROBERT CLERGIERE; NECKLACE, BROOCH AND RING: ST. JOHN; EARRINGS, TACORI; ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY: LUCAS FILM/WALT DISNEY; GETTY; PHOTOSHOT, COLUMBIA/EVERETT/REX SHUTTERSTOCK, MOVIESTORE COLLECTION/REX SHUTTERSTOCK, THE KOBAL COLLECTION/LUCASFILM/20TH CENTURY FOX, CHANNEL 4, © 2015 LUCASFILM LTD™

Colour
as **real** as
you are.

We only make colour
so real and natural
looking, it doesn't look
like hair colour at all.
It just looks like you.
No wonder it's
the **UK's #1***

56 authentic shades

Up to 100% grey coverage



nice'n
easy

C L A I R O L

Simone's colour is #8G Natural Honey Blonde.

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*based on IRI volume sales August 2014 to August 2015



2016 ESSENTIAL LIFE LISTS

Our heads hurt looking at all the bits of information designed to make life easier. Where to start? It's time for GH to cut through the nonsense. Behold everything you ever wanted to know in easy-to-read, crystal-clear lists from the experts. Welcome to your better life – step-by-step...

INSPIRING QUOTES BY WOMEN WHO MATTER

'It's always sunny above the clouds. Always. Every day on earth – every day I have ever had – was secretly sunny, after all'
Caitlin Moran, on-the-money writer

'I think that, when tragedy occurs, it presents a choice. You can give in to the void – the emptiness that fills your heart, your lungs, constricts your ability to think or even breathe. Or you can try to find meaning'
Sheryl Sandberg, boss of Facebook, after being widowed

'It is our choices... that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities' JK Rowling, creator of Harry Potter, and the woman who made a generation of children pick up a book

'If a woman never lets herself go, how will she ever know how far she might have got? If she never takes off her high-heeled shoes, how will she ever know how far she could walk or how fast she could run?'
Germaine Greer, one of the major voices of the feminist movement

Accessories to make your friends envious

By **ANNA MURPHY**, fashion director of *The Times*



◆ **STATEMENT LIPPY** A slash of bright lipstick, with otherwise pared-back

make-up, is a complexion-lifter that works at any age.

◆ **QUIRKY-YET-COMFY-SHOES** I buy my brogues from

Grenson, and have been complimented on my silver Emilys every time I've worn them. I only buy shoes that are comfortable enough to wear day-to-night.

◆ **A STAND-OUT SCARF**

Add another splash of colour with a fine-weave scarf – the more luxurious the better. Try Cos or Rose & Rose.

◆ **JUST-CRAZY-ENOUGH JEWELLERY** You don't need

me to tell you that you need the boring stuff; that a classic pair

of trousers and a fabulous white shirt will make your life easier. But perhaps you haven't worked out that a just-crazy-enough necklace or pair of earrings are the ultimate game-changers. Find new designers at wolfandbadger.com.

◆ **A BRIGHT JACKET**

A tailored and colourful jacket can be slung on over either work wear or jeans. It will transform your look, and very possibly your day. Zara always has the richest pickings.

◆ **THE COSIEST CARDIGAN EVER** I am never without my

DKNY Cozy cardigan. This is Britain we are living in, after all, and the Cozy is – as its name suggests – quite the snuggliest item of clothing ever. Just be warned: you may never want to take it off.

Lexi earrings, £69, Alice Menter at Wolf & Badger (wolfandbadger.com)

Bright lippy works wonders

Cardigan, £180, XS/S-M/L, DKNY (dkny.com)

Penguin necklace, £220, London Bird at Wolf & Badger (wolfandbadger.com)

Jacket, £39.99, XS-XL, Zara

Brogues, £310, 3-8, Grenson (grenson.co.uk)

HOW TO FIND YOUR BEST BRA

By *bosom beautifier* **MICHELLE BURGESS** of *John Lewis*

◆ The ideal everyday bra tends to match your skin tone. White women should own a beige bra and darker women should own a black bra. This should be your wardrobe staple.

◆ To eliminate the dreaded back bulge, go one cup size down and one back size up. It won't be as firm against the rib cage, but it will give you a smoother appearance. This is known as sister or alternative sizing.

◆ Don't assume all sizes are the same from brand to brand! They vary, and the shape of your breasts will also make a difference. For example, if you've lost elastin in your breasts, a full-cup will work better than a half-cup or balcony style.



PODCASTS THAT WILL MAKE YOU SMARTER

These free-to-download radio shows will keep you informed and entertained whether you're on the go or simply having a bit of time to yourself at home.

◆ **NO SUCH THING AS A FISH** The brainy team behind QI has put together a cheering programme that debunks myths and presents quirky facts in a lively, funny way. From iTunes or at qi.com/podcast.

◆ **DESERT ISLAND DISCS**

Rich in history, anecdotes and great music, the archive stretches back to 1951.

Everyone from Dawn French (right) to Tennessee Williams has been a castaway. From iTunes or the BBC website.

◆ **THE ALLUSIONIST** Did you know the word poodle comes from the German word for splash? Host Helen Zaltzman does, and pulls apart the words we use every day to reveal surprising facts. From iTunes, or listen at theallusionist.org.

◆ **CHANNEL 4: UNREPORTED WORLD**

Heart-rending stories and current affairs, ranging from the only all-female anti-rhino-poaching unit to two sisters who found each other after 40 years. From iTunes or channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world.



QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK YOURSELF EVERY DAY

By *novelist and navel gazer* **MATT HAIG**

- ◆ How many times have I checked my phone today when I didn't need to?
- ◆ Have I learnt something new today?
- ◆ Have I helped someone?
- ◆ Have I eaten something that's given me pleasure?
- ◆ Am I getting the right amount of sleep and, if not, is it affecting my mood?
- ◆ Have I spent longer facing a screen than outdoors or with my loved ones?
- ◆ How much time have I spent procrastinating or doing pointless work, and how can I avoid doing it tomorrow?

THINGS I ALWAYS TOLD MY DAUGHTER

By advice columnist and general sage **BEL MOONEY**



Any mother knows that advice given to a teenage daughter is likely to be met with a roll of the eyes and a tongue-click of irritation.

Nevertheless, I've always believed that – though my words of wisdom may go in one ear and out the other – they would leave an echo behind. And now my daughter, Kitty, is grown up and a mother herself, I can see that it worked. Sometimes she tells me that she hears herself sounding like me!

◆ **One day at a time.** Kitty was a sickly child who spent a lot of time in hospital, and so this is the mantra I used to stop her fretting about how things would be next day/month/year. I refused to plan ahead.

◆ **We can find a way through.** This was how I reassured her during the bad times. She needed to know that Mum would always be there to find a way to make things right. And she still knows that is true.

◆ **Don't think somebody is your friend just because she's been friendly.** You can never bear to see your child hurt, but it will inevitably happen. I didn't want her to be so trusting and vulnerable.

◆ **Cultivate independence.** Don't be too obviously needy.

◆ **Always remember you're**

just as good as 'them'. This is something my mother told me when I went to university and married somebody posh! But Kitty still has bursts of insecurity, just as I did.

◆ **Be kind.** I don't like bitchiness and always discouraged it. I've also always encouraged forgiveness, and flipping a problem so that you see the other person's side. This is a counsel of the purest self-interest – because once you drop a burden of resentment, your heart is lighter.

Wisdom that is worth passing on



SONGS TO EMPOWER YOU

By Radio 2 DJ and music oracle **JO WHILEY**



Sing and dance along



A great song isn't something you hear – it's something you feel. It makes your heart go ping and your insides lurch. That's what

these songs are about. Listen to the full playlist at goodhousekeeping.co.uk/jo-whiley-playlist.

◆ **Sia** - Titanium

◆ **Florence and the Machine**

- Shake It Out

◆ **Christina**

Aguilera - Fighter

◆ **Daft Punk**

- Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger

◆ **TLC** - Unpretty

◆ **Sam Cooke** -

A Change Is

Gonna Come

◆ **Gloria Gaynor**

- I Will Survive

◆ **Destiny's Child**

- Survivor

◆ **Kelly Clarkson**

- Since You've Been Gone

◆ **Katy Perry**

- Roar

◆ **Aretha Franklin**

- Respect

◆ **Pink** - Raise

Your Glass

Beauty products every woman should own

By the woman who puts the gorgeous into GH, **EVE CAMERON**



BLACK MASCARA

Whatever your age and colouring, it makes your eyes look bigger and more defined. Go for waterproof to eliminate smudging. I rate those from Lancôme and Max Factor.



BLUSHER

A pop of colour on your cheeks (think country walk rather than three glasses of red in front of the fire) gives your face shape and brightens it.



A GENTLE CLEANSER

Liz Earle's Cleanse & Polish, the La Roche Posay range and Cetaphil are my favourites.



A GREAT MOISTURISER

Actually, two! A morning one with antioxidants and sunscreen for protection and an evening one with vitamin A to repair and renew.



SKIN-IMPROVING BASE

Whether you choose foundation, tinted moisturiser or BB cream, research has found that evening out your skin tone makes you look younger and healthier.



TWEEZERS AND BROW GEL

Make the effort and you'll quickly come to appreciate the face-framing, youth-boosting impact of a groomed brow.

5 DVDS YOU NEED TO OWN

By *Radio 4's Front Row* host, **KIRSTY LANG**



1. All About Eve
2. Pride
3. Cabaret
4. Diva
5. The Last Seduction

INGREDIENTS YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF

By the chef who cleared the supermarket shelves of pomegranate molasses, **YOTAM OTTOLENGHI**



◆ **TAMARIND** Ready-made tamarind pastes are often too acidic, so it's worth making your own. Just soak a chunk of tamarind in warm water for half an hour, then strain.

◆ **PALM SUGAR** This staple of Indonesian cooking has a rich sweetness that I love to use in dressings for Asian coleslaw or mango and papaya salad.

◆ **VALDESPINO SHERRY VINEGAR** It's cask-aged, with a sweet and complex taste. I use it in salad dressings and sauces.

◆ **BLACK GARLIC** White garlic that's heat treated, which results in mellow and soft cloves with the flavour of a balsamic

Liquorice Allsort. Stir slices through risotto or mashed potato, or blitz it with harissa, pomegranate molasses, lemon juice, olive oil and a pinch of chilli flakes as a sauce for roasted aubergines.

Mellow black garlic

THE YOGA POSE THAT WILL MAKE YOU FEEL BRILLIANT

By Jennifer Aniston's yoga teacher, **MANDY INGBER**



WARRIOR 3 (Virabhadrasana III)

Helps you calm down and focus mentally.

Brace your hands on a wall in front of you for support or keep them at your hips for a gentle version.

◆ From a standing position, step forward on your left foot and shift your weight on to your left leg.

◆ Inhale and interlace your fingers behind your back. Hinge forward at

your hips, keeping your torso and right leg in line. Fix your gaze and lean the torso forward as you raise and reach your right leg straight behind you.

◆ Stretch your body into a straight line. Reach your arms forward and activate the muscles in your standing leg. You should look like a capital T.

◆ Hold the pose for five breaths.

◆ To release, move back gracefully to standing up straight with your feet together and repeat on the other side.

Things to keep in your handbag

By designer bag lady **LULU GUINNESS**



The first bag I ever designed was a briefcase, which had several compartments. Now, I often carry several of my own bags around because I

like to show them off as much as possible! Tip out my bag and you will find:

◆ **INSPIRATION** Images, fabric swatches, photographs, magazine clippings... They ensure that I don't forget any great ideas!

◆ **CAR KEYS** I live 10 minutes away from my office, but I love the reminder that I can escape to the country at the weekend.

◆ **IPHONE** After years of nagging from my daughters, I have upgraded my BlackBerry – which had been chewed lovingly by my dog, Waffle – to a shiny new iPhone.

◆ **MIRROR** A vintage compact that my grandmother gave me as a teen. I can actually put on my lipstick (also in my bag) without looking in the mirror, but I



Bag, £395,
Lulu Guinness
(luluguinness.com)

still like to make sure throughout the day that it hasn't worn off.

◆ **SUNGLASSES** Mine are Miu Miu, just in case the sun comes out!

◆ **DIARY** Usually one from Liberty. If it's not in my diary, then it's not happening!

HAIRDRESSER TIPS FOR FEELING GROOMED

by Duchess Kate's personal blow-dry master, **RICHARD WARD**



◆ Use the cold shot on your hair dryer.

Though lots of people ignore

it, the cool button is there for a reason! Hair sets as it cools, so blasting chillier air through your finished style helps keep it in place.

◆ Blow-dry with the nozzle pointing downwards.

This flattens the hair cuticle, helping to smooth hair and reduce frizz or flyaways.

◆ Keep pins or elastic bands in your bag and

you're always ready to change up your hair style from day to night.

◆ Dry shampoo isn't just for cleansing.

It's also great for reviving flat, limp locks – a few spritzes into the roots can add volume and texture.

◆ Get more from your hair products.

Leaving too much water in your hair after washing will dilute any product you put in



Keep your luscious locks looking good

and lessen its effect – squeeze out excess water and gently pat hair dry with a towel before applying any styling or heat-protecting products.

4 WAYS WITH ONE 90cm-SQUARE SCARF

By Liberty's style master, **ANASTASIA BRIANCOURT**, modelled by GH's Nini Khatiblou



LOOSE COWL

Start with a triangle and loosely drape over your shoulders with the point at the front and the lengths tied together behind your neck in a simple knot.



NECKERCHIEF

Fold into a triangle, lay flat on a table, then fold up from the tip of the triangle to form a long, thin shape. Drape around the neck with one end longer than the other, then knot like a man's tie.



TWIST

Make a long, thin shape from your triangle. Place around your neck, then cross the ends over each other again and again until they begin to twist together and form a loop. Tie ends in front.



BACK DRAPE

Fold the scarf into a triangle, then drape around your neck with the body of the triangle at the back. Bring ends forward and tie into a simple knot.

5 CLASSICS FOR YOUR KINDLE

By author (and bookworm) **ALI SMITH**



1. **Wise Children** by Angela Carter
2. **Loitering With Intent** by Muriel Spark
3. **Up The Junction** by Nell Dunn
4. **The Go-Between** by LP Hartley
5. **The Gold Rimmed Spectacles** by Giorgio Bassani



SURPRISING THINGS YOU CAN DO WITH GOOGLE

- ◆ **CHECK ON A FLIGHT** Google the flight number and the search engine will tell you if it is on time or delayed.
- ◆ **USE IT AS A TIMER** Just type in 'set timer for X minutes' and a countdown will pop up in the search bar.
- ◆ **FIND YOUR PHONE** Use GPS tracking to locate your phone – you can even ring it from your desktop, provided you've got the latest version of Google Search. □

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A
CHRISTMAS STORY



DAD TO THE RESCUE

THE YOUNGEST HAS DONE THE MATHS. IT'S NOT
LOOKING GOOD. THERE ARE ONLY SIX SLICES
OF SALTED MAPLE & CHESTNUT PUDDING,
BUT SHE'S SEVENTH IN LINE. LUCKILY DAD SHARES
HIS PIECE, ROUGHLY ALL OF IT, AS DADS DO.

CHRISTMAS

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At last, *the truth about*
New Year's Eve

Feeling pressure to make spectacular plans for the final night of the year? Chillax! Many of us will be celebrating quietly at home. Writer Allison Pearson welcomes the surprising findings of a new GH poll

A few years ago Kate Moss was reported to be in a bit of a panic. The supermodel had cancelled her usual post-Christmas break with her partner and daughter in Thailand, and was looking around for an alternative. No chance. Everywhere was full at New Year, even for one as famous as she. A friend reported Kate saying, 'At this rate, we'll end up spending New Year's Eve in freezing Gloucestershire with the three of us going down the pub.'

Oh darling, the horror! Imagine being Kate Moss and having to spend 31 December with half a shandy and a packet of pork scratchings in the Dog and Duck. Actually, it's quite nice to know that one of the world's most glamorous women frets, as we mortals do, about one of the biggest dates in the calendar. In fact, given all the pressures, I'm surprised that there isn't a full-blown psychological condition



BONG!
 27% of us
 were
 asleep
 before
 midnight

[CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE]
called FONYE – Fear Of (being nowhere on) New Year's Eve.

We are all supposed to be far too relaxed these days to worry about keeping up with the Joneses. Except, I regret to say, there is still one social failure so mortifying that no one would willingly own up to it, not even at gunpoint. Putting it into words is enough to bring me out in a cold sweat. Still, here goes: My name is Allison and I'm not going out on New Year's Eve.

Ouch. Short of having a neon flashing Billy No Mates sign attached to your forehead, there is no surer way to signal social death than admitting you don't have a plan for NYE. Such is the extraordinary weight we place on saying farewell to the old year and seeing in the new that anything short of an invitation made from stiff card on the mantelpiece, inviting you to fireworks, Champagne and first-class fun, feels like a flop.

Well, not any more. For those who would rather spend the night under a duvet than in a cocktail frock, I bring you glad tidings. After last New Year, GH commissioned a YouGov poll which found that nearly half of British adults spend the evening at home with friends or family – and 27% were actually fast asleep by midnight. It turns out that, despite FONYE, many of us secretly prefer a quiet evening in.

What a relief to know I'm not the only party pooper. It took me years to get over my

FONYE. The trouble is that New Year's Eve is the hinge of the year, and on it hangs the future. Fabulous if you've had a wonderful 12 months, with more good things to come: less so if you're feeling sad or uncertain.

As the writer GK Chesterton put it: 'The object of a New Year is not that we should have a new year. It is that we should have a new soul, new feet, a new backbone, new ears, and new eyes.' So, no pressure then.

My friend Jane, when she was recently divorced, put her sleeping kids in the back of the car on New Year's Eve and drove around from 11pm to 1am, just to avoid seeing in 2011 at home by herself. 'It sounds mad, but I couldn't bear how desperate and lonely that would feel,' she told me.

That sense of social expectation kicks in young. As a 14-year-old, I remember wistfully wandering the black-iced streets of our town with a friend, looking through lighted windows at parties we weren't invited to. The pain of exclusion was almost physical. Seven years later, I was in a heaving throng at Trafalgar Square, pressed up against my boyfriend, belting out Auld Lang's Syne with a woolly choir of thousands. Yet, even then, there was something about the enforced jollity that I didn't like. I drank too much to numb the feeling.

Probably the only New Year's Eve when I didn't think I'd be happier at home was the Millennium. With my husband and our best friends, we splashed out on dinner at the Oxo Tower, overlooking the Thames. We had a

heart-stopping view of the fireworks and the dome of St Paul's, gradually emerging through the tendrils of smoke like a full moon. It felt like a properly grand way to welcome a new century, but I'm not doing it again for... oh... another 100 years.

So, this 31 December, I will, once again, be with family and friends. We take it in turns to cook a lovely meal, we dress up a bit, but not so formally that we can't wear slippers or a fleece if we feel like it. We open a special bottle of wine. Silently, we count our blessings. This past year, my husband had surgery. 'God showed me the yellow card,' he jokes. I think of all those my age who got a red card and are no longer here. I

marvel at the children, taller than me now and full of hope. There will be games and, just before midnight, we will turn on the TV and count down with the bongs of Big Ben.

For me, FONYE is now a thing of the past. Because, like all those millions of people who admit that they stay in, I know that, on New Year's Eve, there's no place like home. Have a happy one. □

Bong!

And here is the news...

It's our nearest and dearest who we're most likely to spend New Year's Eve with, according to GH's exclusive poll.

With the sound of Big Ben still ringing in their ears, more than 2,000 British adults were asked how they spent the first few minutes of 2015. **Almost half (48%) were at home** with their partner or immediate family and amazingly **27% were tucked up in bed** before the year had even ended! Another **15% went to a friend or relative's** home to celebrate, with **just 10% making the effort to go out** to a restaurant, bar or organised event.



BONG!

48% of British adults spent last New Year's Eve at home



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ALL HAIL THE NEW FASHION UNIFORM

(or, how three women streamlined their wardrobe and saved time and money)

In all the progress women have made in the workplace, one aspect still separates the men from the women. Men are regarded as being appropriately dressed for most jobs in a suit. Whether or not they add a tie provides more than enough excitement to fuel newspaper headlines for weeks – as was evidenced by TV's Robert Peston. But for women, the rules are different. We feel a need to showcase a variety of new looks on a daily basis. That can be fun – sometimes – but it's also exhausting and expensive... So is it really necessary?

Last Summer, we challenged GH Features Editor Jackie Brown to wear just one outfit for a whole month. Amazingly, her choice (picked with the help of our Fashion team) worked for every eventuality. Her article about it caused a surge of excitement, with Jackie appearing on ITV's This Morning to discuss her experiment. And even after the month was over, Jackie found she preferred to dress for work from a severely edited selection of outfits.

Her new philosophy inspired other GH staff to simplify and pare back their workwear. But what would it be like in the real world? Step forward three readers with very different lifestyles to face the challenge – and change the way you think about what you wear each day.

'I was amazed no one spotted what I was up to!'

With a job in marketing, Alice Oliver, 38, wanted an outfit she felt comfortable wearing at meetings and also with her two young sons

My style

I've got to get my two young boys out of the door early so I can be at my desk for 8am. I put out my clothes the night before, so I just have to step into them. My job in marketing at the University of Derby is very varied. I can be on my knees building displays, sitting at a desk or standing outside for three hours with a film crew. I need to be dressed for all eventualities. I'm normally quite smart – cropped lightweight trousers in Summer and dresses with tights in Winter.

Alice's uniform

For the month, I chose to wear a dress rather than separates, and

I wanted a black or blue one that was very simple and could be dressed up or down. I tried on about 10 different styles before settling on this knee-length navy dress from the John Lewis range. I liked it best and it was also the cheapest one I tried on – I bought three to get me through the week.

How I wore it

The dress was just right, and the elegant cut forced me to wear smarter jackets and shoes than usual. I noticed that it even changed the way I walk, with the tighter skirt turning my long strides into a dainty totter. I often don't have time to change between getting home to the boys and their bedtime, but the dark material and stretchy fabric meant the dress coped well. As it was machine washable, I'd have one in the wash and one drying on a hanger while I wore the other. When you wear the same thing every day you have to get creative with styling, and I found I could use belts to change the length and shape of the dress
[CONTINUED OVER PAGE]

Alice at work



DRESS STYLED WITH
Jacket, £120, 8-22,
Linea at House of Fraser.
Bag, £285, Carlo Pazolini
(carlopazolini.com/uk).
Boots, £225, 3-8,
LK Bennett. Necklace,
Alice's own

Alice Oliver

DRESS: £69

*'I enjoyed being
polished and
having a dress
on every day'*



FEATURE **NATASHA LAVENDER**
PHOTOGRAPHY **KATIE THOMPSON**
FASHION **JO ATKINSON**

[CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE] when I got a bit tired of it. I usually spend about £250 a month on clothes, but during the experiment I just bought a few necklaces and scarves, so I saved quite a bit.

And the verdict

By the second week I was tired of wearing the same thing, but this wore off and I found new ways to update it. I enjoyed being polished and having a dress on every day. People were complimenting me on my outfits, which never happened before – on one particularly good day, I was called smart, well put-together and chic! However, while people would say they liked my cardigan, jackets or shoes, no one spotted that I was wearing the same dress. Even a fashion-conscious colleague I was sure would notice didn't realise that I wore the same thing to a lunch date two weeks in a row. At first I was amazed, and then I wondered if I would have noticed either. It made me realise that no one is that interested in what you wear from one day to the next, which I find quite reassuring. I've learnt that it's good to have some of the choice taken away from you. Going forward, I'll have a capsule wardrobe with a few trusted outfits to wear to work.



'I was complimented as looking smart, well put-together and chic!'



Tonia Harvey

**TOP: £55
TROUSERS: £59**

STYLED WITH
Necklace, £25,
Autograph at
Marks &
Spencer.
Bangle, £55,
Lola Rose
(lolarose.co.uk).
Shoes, £195,
3-8, Russell &
Bromley. Bag,
£199, Modalu
(modalu.com)

'This has been my best fashion experiment ever'

As a project manager, Tonia Harvey, 54, needed an office-friendly look that could be smartened up for visitors

My style

I've experimented with my look quite a lot in the past few years. In 2011 I was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis, which meant giving up my beloved high heels. I love shoes, and this had a huge impact on what I felt I could wear. It took me three years before I could take all my heels to the charity shop. That was when I realised I needed to get over it and develop a new style that worked with flat shoes. I wanted my work uniform to be comfortable, age appropriate and something I could dress up for important meetings. I can be called into a client meeting or to see the top management at short notice so, while some colleagues wear jeans, I try to look smart every day.

Tonia's uniform

We decided on smart trousers and a top for the month, and I tried on a lot of combinations before finding the right outfit – cropped black trousers and a light blue top, both from Cos. I tried a few white shirts, but they all looked a bit ordinary with the trousers and I felt good in the blue one straightaway. It's such a flattering colour and has a twisted detail on the front, which gives it a bit of individuality and is very me. I bought three, so I had enough to have a clean one every day, and two pairs of trousers.

How I wore it

At first I was worried the distinctive blue top would be limiting, but I soon learnt to complement it with scarves

HAIR AND MAKE-UP: LINDSEY POOLE AND CAROLINE PIASECKI. ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY: RICHARD RICHARDS
DESK CHAIR AND STOOL: HABITAT. MUGS, ANTHROPOLOGIE. RED BOWL, TOAST. VASES, HABITAT.

and layers. Normally I take longer to decide what to wear when I have a big day ahead, but I only had to choose the accessories. I could dress it up or down, and it never felt out of place, even in high-powered situations. Standing in for my boss at an important meeting, I felt confident when I added a smart black jacket. A few weeks later I even wore it out to a gig, adding a denim jacket and a co-ordinating scarf. Looking through my wardrobe for a certain cardigan, my eyes would flicker to the other items I enjoy wearing, but I never found myself longing to put them on.

And the verdict

None of my colleagues noticed, and when I mentioned it to my boss, she laughed and said, 'How boring!' But it's been good fun. Normally I wouldn't bother to add accessories to an outfit, but I've enjoyed the challenge of using them to make the clothes look different, and I will wear them more. I've built up quite an impressive collection of scarves! I never got fed up with it. Of all my recent fashion experiments since giving up heels, this has been the most positive – and is something I will continue.

Tonia at work



'I've built up an impressive collection of scarves!'

Wendi Roberts

**TOP: £89
CULOTTES: £69**

'When the novelty wore off I felt frumpy'



STYLED WITH
Necklace, £19.50,
Marks & Spencer.
Cuff, £15, Dorothy
Perkins. Shoes,
£185, LK Bennett.
Bag, £229, Radley
(radley.co.uk)

'After a month I needed liberating!'

Primary school teacher Wendi Roberts, 46, usually wears eye-catching clothes that her pupils will notice, so she wondered what they would make of her own school uniform

My style

I normally like to wear clothes that appeal to children. I'll pick out a dress with a bright animal print and wear a pair of fun shoes. During the wardrobe challenge I would be covering some of the Deputy Head's responsibilities and have important meetings, so I decided to try something a bit smarter.

Wendi's uniform

Usually I favour skirts for work, but eventually I opted for black cropped culottes from Cos. They are very on-trend, but also practical as they are easy to move about in. The top took longer to choose, but I knew the dusky pink of the Jigsaw silky top would be easy to match up with jackets and accessories I had at home.

How I wore it

For my first look I added a black jacket and fancy heels. I had that excited first day of school feeling, and a couple of colleagues complimented me on my outfit. I was with people who'd be seeing me several times a week, and this made me more aware of my accessories, as I tried to make myself look different in case they noticed. I had two pairs of culottes

and three shirts. The culottes were very easy to clean, but the silky fabric of the top creased easily. Although not having to decide what to wear made getting dressed much quicker, I was still having to iron in the morning.

And the verdict

As time wore on I became more self-conscious, and by week three the novelty had faded and I felt frumpy. It didn't feel like putting on a smart outfit, just a dull uniform. I noticed the top had snagged and didn't look as pristine as in the first week. Friends who knew what I was doing assured me I still looked smart, but I was surprised that nobody else commented. The kids are forthright about what I wear but, while they would spot my quirky shoes, they didn't mention anything about my clothes.

In the first couple of weeks I was quite creative with accessories, but it tailed off as time passed. A new colleague who met me towards the end admired my culottes, but I still felt fed up and bored. Having a staple wardrobe with a few different options is convenient, but I had good days and bad days. I couldn't wait until it was finished – being able to wear something else again was liberating!



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Shirt, £39.95, 8-18,
TM Lewin
(tmlewin.co.uk)



Skirt, £36,
8-16, Oasis

1 START SAFE

Begin building your basic work outfit with one safe, classic, neutral element that you can dress up or down. A well-fitted white shirt looks chic tucked into a pencil skirt, and you can also pair it with printed cropped trousers and heels.

2 KEEP IT SIMPLE

You may be tempted to pick something elaborate for your uniform, but a lot of detail will make it more memorable – and noticeable when you wear it nearly every day.

3 STYLE TO YOUR STRENGTHS

A dress is an obvious choice, as it means you only need to buy and style one item, but comfort is most important. Choose staples that fit well and make you feel confident. If they don't, you'll tire of them quickly.



Scarf, £18, Sugarhill Boutique
(sugarhillboutique.com)

4 GET PERSONAL

Getting creative with your accessories is the best way to mix up your look and break up the neutral basics. Add personality with a favourite scarf or bright belt, or use patterned or coloured tights as a fun yet smart touch in cooler weather.

GOLDEN RULES OF UNIFORM DRESSING

Follow these steps to revolutionise your working wardrobe

5 BE PREPARED TO INVEST

Good-quality pieces will save you money in the long run, so treat your basic outfit as an investment. Inexpensive fabrics often stretch, shrink and fade if you wear them every day. If you have a high street budget, stick with navy, black, white or grey, which will look more expensive.

6 BLING IT ON

Experiment with statement jewellery. Finish a shift dress with an oversized necklace, or try the latest look of layering smaller chains. Tassel earrings – whether dainty and dangling or large and look-at-me – are a hot pick this season.



Earrings, £6,
Monsoon

Necklace, £129,
Cadenzza
(cadenzza.co.uk)

7 HAVE FUN WITH FOOTWEAR

Shoes are an excellent way to add detail and charm. Statement heels or a black patent pump are instant winners, or experiment with trendy flats, preppy brogues, bold colours, abstract prints and metal buckles. To look instantly smarter, go for a pointed toe.



Brogues, £60,
3-8, Clarks

Shoes, £210,
3-8, LK Bennett

8 THINK PRACTICAL

You'll be wearing and washing this outfit at least once a week, so choose a material that can cope. Thick crepe is flattering, and easy to care for as it won't crease. Avoid fabrics that need dry cleaning, as this can be hectic and expensive to build into your routine.

ROCKING THEIR OWN STYLE

A capsule wardrobe isn't just practical for the office – these high-profile women are known for their signature styles...

KATE MIDDLETON

The public recognises that Kate's look works well, which is why you can guarantee that anything she is spotted in will sell out within days. Favourites include a grey and yellow dress by go-to designer Jenny Packham, a blue M-Missoni coat, and LK Bennett nude heels.

Right Royal in neutral heels



HILLARY CLINTON

Democratic Presidential candidate Hillary is a self-proclaimed 'pantsuit aficionado'. Her first Instagram post was a photo of a rack displaying three sets of trousers and jackets in red, white and blue, with the caption 'Hard Choices', after her autobiography.



ANNA WINTOUR

Vogue's Editor in Chief has the final say on the latest trends, but she's not about to abandon her staples. Her sharp bob and oversized black sunglasses are instantly recognisable, and she often wears items more than once, particularly her crystal necklaces, Prada dresses and Manolo Blahnik heels.



Adapting trends to fit her image



NICOLA STURGEON

The SNP leader has become a style icon since adopting strong outfits for her public appearances. Her brightly coloured fitted suits and heels grab attention and help her stand out from the crowd.



CARRIE MATHISON

Having TV characters repeat outfits makes them seem more realistic, and Homeland's Carrie (Claire Danes) is far too busy to go shopping. She wears her beige mac, grey suit and battered bag across her body throughout the show: a uniform that helps her stay inconspicuous. □

★ Find more fashion advice, details and opinions about work uniforms at goodhousekeeping.co.uk/workwear-challenge

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Prue Leith

I spent too long riding horses and chasing boys!

Experience is valuable, and who better to pass on their life lessons than GH's favourite women? Cookery writer and novelist Prue Leith talks grandchildren, love and regrets

Female friendships are incredibly valuable. When I was married I didn't really have a close woman friend. I had lots of business friends and acquaintances but I didn't have someone you ring up when you're feeling desperate. I was very self-sufficient in our family and I adored my husband, Rayne. We had a few close friends but Rayne was reclusive. After he died, aged 80, I realised just how valuable the people who became very close friends were. I now have a partner, John, who lives close to me and is amazingly gregarious. He knows absolutely everybody and I now have a mass of friends. I'm finally getting to know my neighbours after 40 years, which is terrific. The only problem is I'm 75 and so forgetful that if I meet them all at a party I think, who is that...? I know them!

It's important to keep moving and tick off that bucket list. I am fundamentally very well and have retained my energy. I don't want to sit down and do nothing. Ever. I'm conscious that the things I want to do, I have to do fast. I've never been to Japan, so I have to get on and go there. We're also trying to go to the Middle East, Far East and South America. And I don't want to be one of those old ladies who have so much junk, their children have a horrible time. I have cleared out absolutely everything twice. It goes into the skip, to the distress of my secretary! I'm having a lovely life, is the long and short of it!

Happiness is an attitude of mind. The old cliché of the glass is half full is absolutely right and so is that other expression, you want to surround yourself with people who are radiators and not drains – those people who suck the life out of you because they are always moaning and never happy. My mother's great expression was 'put a smile on it'. She was really lonely when my father died aged 54. She was alone for the last 50 years of her life but she never complained. As she would say, don't be a misery guts!



'Love is all any of us cares about,' says Prue

I could have studied harder. I was very impetuous and emotional as a young woman, which would get me into trouble. I wish I had been bit more studious and a little less of a good time girl. There are things I greatly regret not knowing. I'm useless at history. I spent too much time as a teenager riding horses and lusting after boys! I'm not saying I didn't want to do those things, but I should have done them a little less and studied a little harder!

Love is the only thing that matters. All of the great novels are love stories. Love is all any of us cares about. When people are lonely, what they are missing is love. It's not that you need 15 people in the room. You just need someone to love you.

Being a grandmother means not parking the kids in front of the telly. I adore my three grandchildren but I find them exhausting! They are five, three and two. They love to help with the cooking and

gardening. We were making batter the other day and the older two were fine, but the baby did it too and suddenly there was batter in everyone's hair!

The secret to success is doing what needs to be done. Anthony Trollope is one of the greatest novelists and when asked how he had written 47 books, he put it down to cobbler's wax, by which he meant glue your bum to a seat! If I have to get a book done by a certain date, I get the book done. If I'm running out of time, I just get up earlier, do four hours and go back and correct it in the afternoon. Four hours of creative writing a day is enough.

If you try, you can achieve. I will have a go at anything. My first thought was to teach people to ride horses, then I thought I would be an actress, and then a painter. I had lots of ideas. But I ended up running a company, and I loved it! I got as much of a buzz out of a profit and loss account as I got out of a wonderfully decorated wedding cake. You can do stuff you don't think you can, if you only bloody try! □

For the record

Prue has been a caterer, a restaurateur and opened Leith's School of Food and Wine in 1975.

★

She was born in South Africa, but moved to the UK in her 20s.

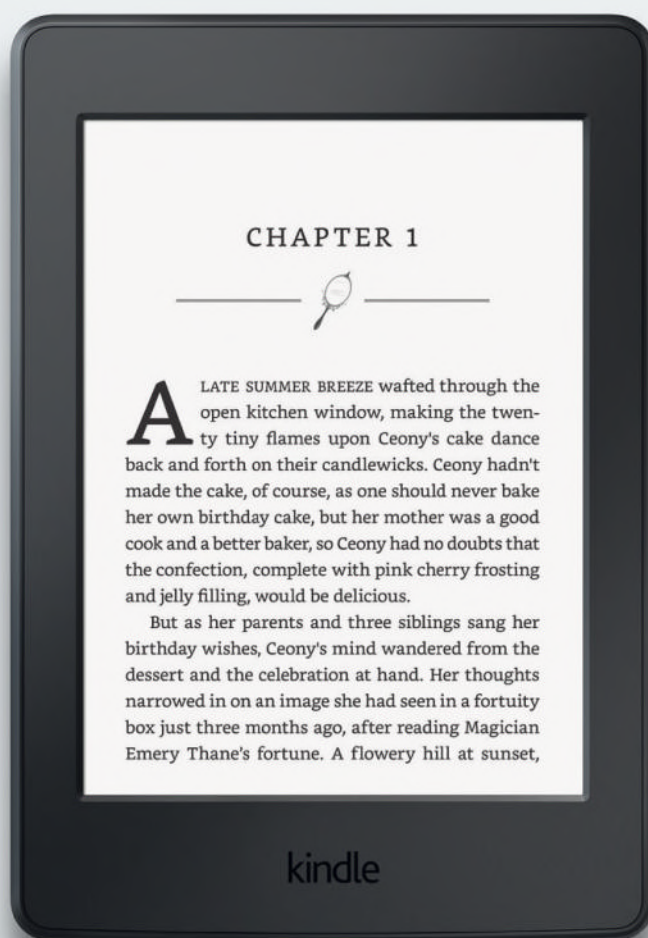
★

Her latest novel, *The Food Of Love*, is about three generations in the restaurant world.

★

She has written six novels, a memoir, 12 cookbooks and is a judge on *The Great British Menu*.

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FERRERO

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GOOD LIFE

THIS MONTH WITH *Caroline Quentin*

The former star of *Men Behaving Badly* and *Blue Murder* is in a bonnet and corset for her latest role. Here's what else she is looking forward to



TV

DICKENSIAN

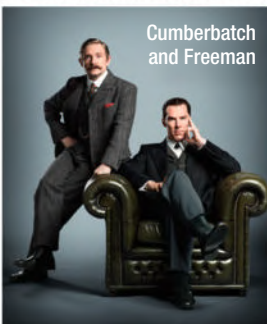
Filming this 20-episode Victorian drama has been fascinating. It's based on some of Charles Dickens' best-loved books. I am Mrs Bumble from *Oliver Twist*. She's a real piece of work – the nastiest character I've ever played. She's vile to her husband and a terrible social climber – she's so horrible it's hilarious.



Stephen Rea as Inspector Bucket: 'It's based on some of Dickens' best loved books'

WAR AND PEACE

I'm very excited about this adaptation of Tolstoy's classic novel starring *Downton Abbey*'s Lily James, and James Norton. It doesn't matter if you haven't read the book – it's a brilliant story, the setting and costumes are opulent, and it's a six-part drama so you can get stuck into it.



Cumberbatch and Freeman

SHERLOCK

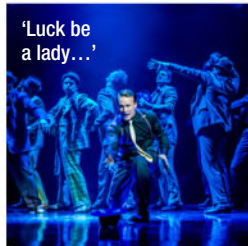
People love Benedict Cumberbatch! Unlike the original TV show, this one-off special is set in the Victorian era. I'll look out for it, even though we'll be competing in bonnets... Corset Wars, we can call it.

JERICO

This eight-part series is set in the 1870s in Yorkshire, and stars Call The Midwife's Jessica Raine. My friend and *Blue Murder* co-star, Paul Loughran, is in it, too.



'It's a great time for period dramas'



THEATRE

GUYS AND DOLLS

The Savoy Theatre

This is the greatest musical ever written and Sophie Thompson (who plays Adelaide) is brilliant. My kids have never seen it, so I'll be taking them, too.



Sheridan Smith as Fanny Brice

FUNNY GIRL

Menier Chocolate Factory, London

The wonderful Sheridan Smith stars in the role originally played by Barbra Streisand. She played my daughter in *Blood Strangers* years ago, and I love the songs.

MUSIC

TEXAS

Various UK dates

Lead singer Sharleen Spiteri has a beautiful voice, and her band, Texas, is great.

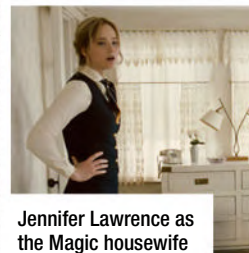
FILM

THE DANISH GIRL

Eddie Redmayne plays a transgender woman in this drama about artist Lili Elbe. I'm happy that at last we're able to talk openly about gender fluidity. The more we do, the more we can take away the phobias around it.



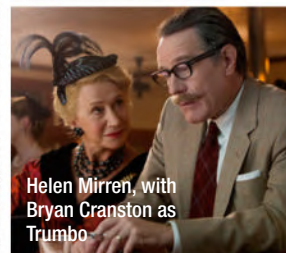
Eddie Redmayne as transgendered artist Lili Elbe



Jennifer Lawrence as the Magic housewife

JOY

This film about an ordinary woman achieving great things really appeals to me. Jennifer Lawrence stars as a single mum who invented the Magic Mop and made millions.



Helen Mirren, with Bryan Cranston as Trumbo

TRUMBO

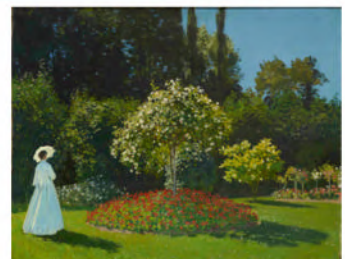
I am fascinated by this film about the screenwriter of *Spartacus*, Dalton Trumbo, who was accused of being a Communist during the McCarthyite purges of Hollywood in the 1940s. It's all about freedom of thought and expression.

ART

PAINTING THE MODERN GARDEN: MONET TO MATISSE

The Royal Academy

This might be the highlight of my year! I've seen a lot of Monet paintings in Paris and I'm a huge Matisse fan – I went to see his cut-outs at Tate Modern last year. My hobby is gardening, too! The Royal Academy, plants, Monet and Matisse... What more could I want? ☐



'Monet and gardening – what more could I want?'

My RESOLUTION REVOLUTION!

Tired of breaking her good intentions by 2 January, Kathy Lette has drawn up her own wish list for 2016 – one that puts women firmly in front...

My New Year's resolution is to give up resolutions. Every year, I vow to give up cake, cocktails and couch-potato tendencies, only to revert back to my bad habits in less than a week. So I've decided to give up giving up things. It's taken a lot of self-control and determination, but I've even managed to give up not drinking! So as friends stoically attempt to survive on skimmed water and half a crouton, I'm experimenting with a wish list instead.

My first wish for 2016 is that women take over running the world for a day. We would have the Middle East, global warming and the financial meltdown solved in a few hours – certainly by the end of the afternoon. With women running the world, we would never again be condescended to by car mechanics, exploited by tradesmen, overlooked for promotion or groped on crowded public transport. In fact, men would finally realise that we no longer want their seats on the bus – we want their seats on the board!

One question on the minds of most women is – why doesn't chocolate go straight to your boobs? Therefore, my second wish for 2016 is that scientists stop work on the Hadron Collider and put some time into proving that kale is fattening and cake is nature's penicillin.

And what of my fashion wish list for the coming year? Yes, trends come in one era and out the other, but if women held power, elasticated tracksuit pants would be the height of fashion. Speaking of height, high heels would become a low priority. Crippling stilettos would become a fashion faux pas. My wish list would involve female engineers designing footwear that is flat all day, then turns into a fetching stiletto at night called, perhaps, the Social Climber.

Society's obsession with the bikini wax would also wane. Our nether regions would have national park status. In the nude, it would look as though we all had a member of The Jackson 5, circa 1970, in a headlock.

So yes, my wish list would mean that sturdy, sensible underwear would sell like the hot cakes that the men of 2016 would spend all their time cooking,

Wish list



Kale is off the menu...



and cake is the new superfood



Towering heels will be very much off-trend



Men, it's pinnies-on for a lesson in domesticity



Oh, and while you're in the classroom...



On Kathy's agenda: 'Scientists should put time into proving that kale is fattening and cake is nature's penicillin'

because house-husbandry classes would also be mandatory. Men would not only attend training schools to learn to put down the toilet seat and also finally realise that sitting on the loo is not a leisure activity.

The top dish served by restaurants would be domestic goddess, roasted slowly, on a spit. (The way to a woman's heart is definitely through her stomach. That is NOT aiming too high.) Blokes would learn that there's no greater aphrodisiac than the sight of a man in a cooking apron. And speaking of sex... the only reason women fake orgasms is because men fake foreplay. My wish list for 2016 would make female genital orienteering courses compulsory. Then men would realise that Mutual Orgasm is not an insurance company.

My most important wish, however, is for equal pay. From early November on, British women effectively stop earning for the year in relation to men. But a chancellor called Georgina Osborne would put an end to female debt-lag.

An all-female High Court would also make sure that rape victims were not brutalised by She Asked For It insinuations. Imagine anyone saying that in a murder trial: 'Yes, it was consensual death.' On my wish list, war would be passé, tampons free, wrinkles celebrated and motherhood the ultimate accolade.

Roll on 2016, when I'd like women to feel that everything is possible – except perhaps for mountaineering in stilettos and moon landing in a ball gown. We will leave that for the following year... □

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Andrew

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We're having a festive BOOKFEST

Christmas is all about curling up on the sofa with a big pile of books and a glass of mulled wine. Whether you're looking for gift ideas or just a little inspiration, these seven famous faces share the reads they can't wait to get lost in this season...

'My holiday reads will take me back to my Cold Feet days'

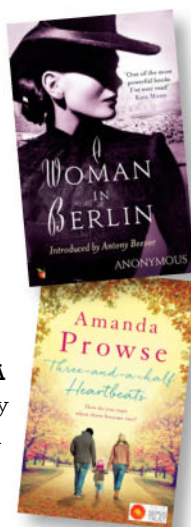
For actress and cookbook author **Fay Ripley**,

Christmas means lots of family and lots of noise! Her book choices offer food for thought...

◆ 'If I manage to find a quiet moment, I'm planning to re-read **A WOMAN IN BERLIN**. It's the diary of the anonymous author's time in the occupied city in 1945 and her fight to survive. Whenever I visit Berlin, I imagine the lives lived on those same streets in quite a different city.

Nearly 20 years ago I first read the pilot script for Cold Feet by **MIKE BULLEN** – now, at last, he has written a novel, called **TRUST**. He has the ability to make us laugh and cry, and I can't wait to read it.

Fay:
Imagining
Berlin



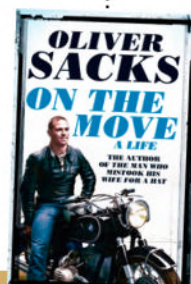
THREE-AND-A-HALF HEARTBEATS

by **AMANDA PROWSE** is a tragic story about a family torn apart by the death of their little girl from sepsis. All proceeds will go to SepsisUK, which I think is brilliant.'

'I am looking forward to the big chill'

Her debut was the biggest-selling hardback novel of the year, but The Girl On The Train author, **Paula Hawkins**, is keen to get away from it all to celebrate.

◆ 'I grew up in Zimbabwe, so a cold Christmas is still a bit of a novelty. My ideal would be to spend it in a remote cottage where I can shut myself away and read. I'll take **OLIVER SACKS'** autobiography, **ON THE MOVE**, which was published just before he died this Summer. I've always been a fan of his writing, and I hear he had an amazing life.'



Jojo: clever choice



'I'm planning a thriller of a Christmas'

It's been a busy year for **Jojo Moyes**: not only has she written a new novel, After You, she's also been involved in the film adaptation of her bestseller, Me Before You.

◆ 'For pure, unadulterated pleasure, I love **LEE CHILDS'** books featuring former military cop Jack Reacher. I'm hoping to be given his latest, **MAKE ME**, for Christmas. His thrillers are completely addictive. **DAVID MITCHELL** is

such a virtuoso writer, and I love the fact you never know in which direction he's going to take you. His new book, **SLADE HOUSE**, is a chilling horror story.

My last choice is **DISCLAIMER** by **RENÉE KNIGHT**. The premise is so clever: a writer gets sent a book which turns out to be based on an incident in her own life.'

'A sad read... and a trip to Japan!'

Former Blue Peter presenter **Janet Ellis** loves Christmas and has lots of family traditions – including marching the Christmas pudding around the house in a conga line! Her first novel, *The Butcher's Hook*, is out in February.

◆ 'I love that bit between Christmas and New Year – there's lots of time to read. On my list is **GRIEF IS THE THING WITH FEATHERS** by **MAX PORTER**.

It's ostensibly about a widower raising his two sons, but from what I've heard it's so much more than that. I love **ANNE ENRIGHT**,

and look forward to her new book, **THE GREEN ROAD**. She has that ability of making the small important, and she's very funny. I love Japanese food, so I'll be dipping into **NANBAN: JAPANESE SOUL FOOD** by former MasterChef winner **TIM ANDERSON**.'

Janet: time to read



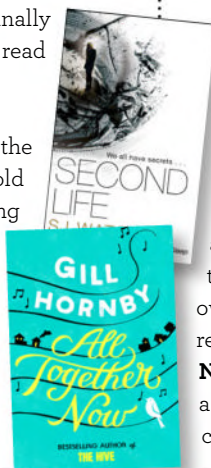
Adele: a McEwan fan

'It's a time to catch up with writers I love'

For author **Adele Parks**, a perfect day would be spent snuggled up with a slice of Christmas cake, a cup of tea and a book. Her latest novel is *If You Go Away*.

◆ 'I'm massively looking forward to the new psychological thriller from **SJ WATSON**. **SECOND LIFE** is about a woman who loves her husband but is obsessed by a stranger. I know from *Before I Go To Sleep* that his writing is tense, authentic and fresh. **ALL TOGETHER NOW** by **GILL HORNBY** is a novel set in a small commuter town that may regain some community spirit if its choir can win the county choral championship. I've been promised a feelgood read.

Hopefully, I'll finally get the chance to read **THE CHILDREN ACT** by **IAN MCEWAN**, about the case of a 17-year-old boy who is refusing life-saving medical treatment for religious reasons. Ian's writing is observant, raw and lyrical.'



'I devour Jojo's books like they're pasties!'

When she's not making us laugh, **Sarah Millican** loves a good blub. She's planning a quiet time with her husband, pets and a good tear-jerker.

◆ 'There are a few books on my shelf that I've been saving for when I have time to read properly rather than in the bath (I say bath, I mean loo... But I'm being polite). First up is **AFTER YOU** by **JOJO MOYES**. It's the sequel to *Me Before You*, which

made me cry. I devour Jojo's books like they're pasties.

Next on my pile is **THE INVISIBLE WOMAN: HOW TO NAVIGATE THE VINTAGE YEARS** by **HELEN WALMSLEY-JOHNSON**. I love her writing in *The Guardian*, so I'm looking forward to a longer stint of it – and finding out what to expect in the next 20 years!

I'm halfway through the excellent **A BOOK FOR HER**. **BRIDGET CHRISTIE** is a friend, and this book is like she's sitting next to me in all her feminist, hilarious, smart glory.'

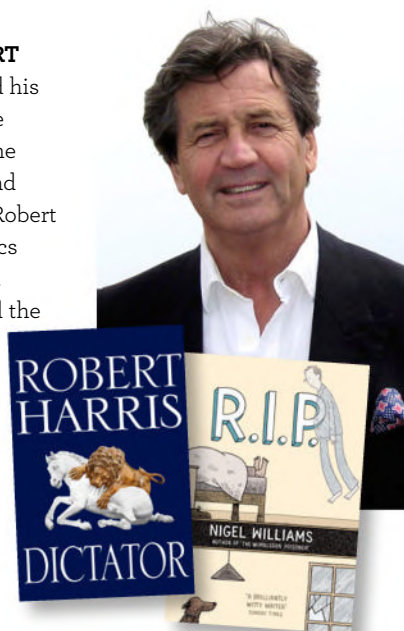


'From history to hilarity!'

Broadcaster and novelist **Melvyn Bragg** is looking forward to a festive season seeing old friends and reading lots of books. His latest is *Now Is The Time*.

◆ 'I'm a big fan of **ROBERT HARRIS** so I'd like to read his latest, **DICTATOR**. It's the third in his series about the Roman statesman and philosopher Cicero. Robert is very good at politics and evoking a period.

I don't want to spoil the plot of **R.I.P.**, but I will say that it starts with a man discovering that he's dead in his own bed. Who could resist that? The author, **NIGEL WILLIAMS**, is a wonderfully funny comic writer.'





Two

paths

Divergent.

You choose the

one less travelled.

It leads you through

The Shire and past

Animal Farm. Up

ahead you spot a

Little House on the

Prairie and inside you

find three bears –

Paddington, Rupert

and Grylls. Back outside

the wind blows in the

willows and you pass a

hitchhiker who offers you

a guide to the galaxy. You

go down a rabbit hole, find A

Passage to India and arrive Out

of Africa. On the horizon lies a

Brave New World and there, at the

end of The Road, you find it.

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The secret to
a great night's sleep

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SECRETS only rich people know

The very wealthy are no different from you or me, says financial expert Jasmine Birtles, they just know the secrets to growing their pot of gold. Follow their healthy money habits to a wealthier life...

1 YOU DON'T NEED MONEY TO MAKE MONEY

It's a myth that you need lots of cash to begin with. When it comes to investing, even small amounts of money put into a stock market fund or a pension product regularly will quietly grow over time. It's all thanks to the power of compound interest – where you make interest on your interest – which Albert Einstein described as 'the eighth wonder of the world'.

DO IT NOW

Set up at least one monthly standing order to put money into long-term investments. History has shown that stocks and shares-based investments do the best, particularly if you can save tax with them. Even if you're only able to spare £25 a month, thanks to compound interest it will increase. The earlier you start, the better, but even if you're approaching retirement there is still time to invest. For good advice on investing, go to the Money Advice Service (moneyadviceservice.org.uk).

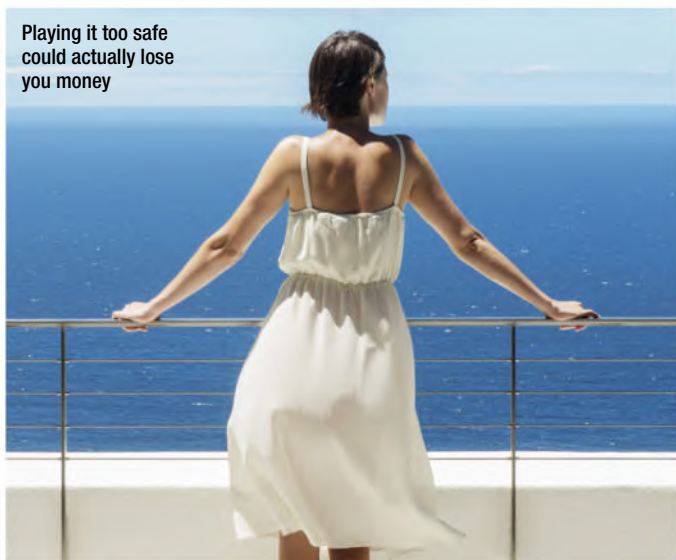


LATTJO indoor range from £5

Come home to play

Hard day at the office? Things on your mind? The solution is more fun than you think. Because the act of playing has been shown to decrease stress and develop problem solving abilities in adults and children. So round up the kids and hop, skip, jump your way to a relaxed evening with the new LATTJO range of toys and games.

Playing it too safe
could actually lose
you money



2 TAKE RISKS, BUT EDUCATED ONES

Clever investors know you won't make much by putting your money into safe products like savings accounts – in the long term, these can actually lose you money by not keeping up with inflation. The stock market has a 110-year record of delivering more than a 7% return annually (whereas savings accounts have averaged closer to 3%) according to fool.co.uk.

DO IT NOW

Put aside enough in an easy-access savings account to cover expenses for three to six months, then put as much of your allowance (this tax year, it's £15,240) as possible in a stocks and shares ISA if you have an appetite for risk. These are different from cash ISAs. A cheap and easy product to invest in is an index tracker fund that goes up and down with the FTSE 100 or the FTSE All Share. Find out more at fool.co.uk.

3 SET GOALS – AND MAKE SACRIFICES TO REALISE THEM

Not only do wealthy people set long term goals, but 67% of them put them in writing, according to money author Thomas Corley. When you have a bigger goal, you'll find the impetus to sacrifice the small stuff. Former Dragons' Den investor Hilary Devey started her multi-million-pound business, Pall-Ex, as a 39-year-old single mother. She couldn't get funding from banks, so sold her house and downgraded her car to fund its start-up.

DO IT NOW

Write down your short-term, medium-term

Stay
focused



and long-term goals. These may include early retirement, setting up your own business or having an extra holiday this year. Then think about how you will achieve them. What do you need to sacrifice to get there? Get the whole family involved so that you're all clear about what your goals are and how you'll reach them.

4 DROP TRIVIA, GAIN WISDOM

A massive 67% of rich people only watch TV for one hour or less per day, according to rich-chronicler Thomas Corley. Instead, they read a lot – but not Jilly Cooper bonk-busters. 'The rich are voracious readers on how to improve themselves,' says Corley. 'In fact, over two-thirds read for self-improvement for 30 minutes each day.'

DO IT NOW

Switch off the TV and grab a good book. Find out how the stock market works from TV financial guru Alvin Hall's *The Stock Market Explained*. Also take a look at my book *Beat The Banks* for an explanation of different investments and how to manage them. If you don't already, commit to reading at least one money article in your favourite newspaper each week.

How they made it

RICHARD BRANSON



Started running a student magazine at age 16, which he funded by selling advertising space. With the profit he was able to launch a mail-order record company and later, in 1972, Virgin

Records. Since then he has founded more than 200 successful Virgin companies.

NET WORTH: £3.31 billion

JO MALONE



Left school at 14 to look after her sick mother and her cosmetics business. Jo's bath oils, made at the kitchen table, were so popular she launched her own company, which she sold to Estée Lauder in 1999.

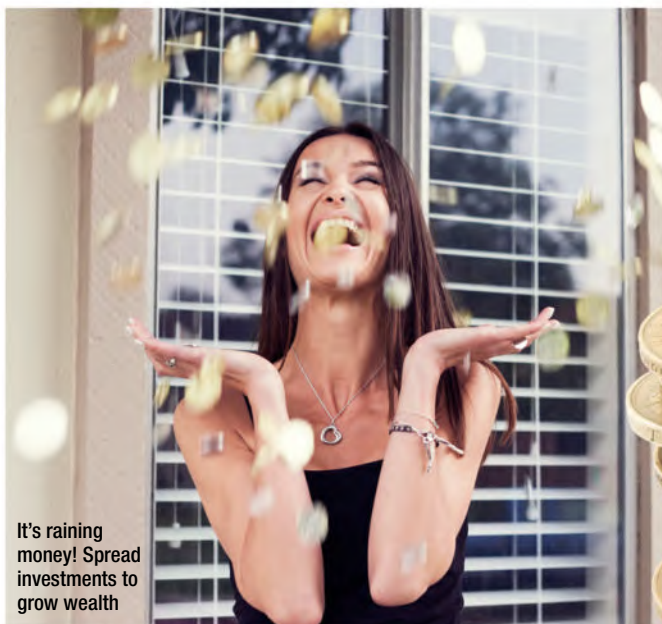
NET WORTH: Undisclosed today; £6 million in 2006

JULIE DEANE



Started The Cambridge Satchel Company in 2008, aged 41, with just £600. Her business partner is her mother, Freda Thomas.

NET WORTH: Undisclosed; but company has £13 million turnover



It's raining money! Spread investments to grow wealth



5 WORK HARD

Unless they have inherited it, married it or divorced it, it's difficult to find a rich person who has not worked their socks off. Deborah Meaden says, 'People who always seem to succeed simply work harder than the rest.' They also use failure as a stepping stone. As Richard Branson says, 'You don't learn to walk by following rules. You learn by doing, and by falling over.'

DO IT NOW

Set up support systems around you. Friends and family can help, but it's important to network with people in your field, particularly those who could help you go further in your work or your goals. Use LinkedIn to find networks to join. Meetup.com has special interest groups everywhere, which cover everything from running a start-up to industry-specific gatherings.

6 DON'T SCRIMP ON FINANCIAL ADVICE

It's worth paying a financial advisor or planner to go through the options with you, even if you don't have millions to put away. Financial advisor Marc Woodward, of Legal and Medical Investments, says, 'Just by implementing some sensible tax planning and gaining better investment returns, you save a fortune.'

DO IT NOW

Paying for financial advice means you get genuinely independent views. It's likely to cost between £100 and £150 per hour, although the first consultation is usually free. If you have very little in the way of savings, you may only need the advice you gain in that one session. If you have more to invest, and perhaps some complex financial issues like inheritance tax or a number of pensions and investments, you're likely to need help on an ongoing basis. Find fully independent advisors near you at unbiased.co.uk.

7 DON'T PUT ALL YOUR EGGS IN ONE BASKET

The best way to build wealth and keep it is to spread your money across different types of investments. Hilary Devey (net worth £50 million) has invested in a number of properties, as well as her businesses. 'I dabble a bit in stocks and shares,' she says. 'I made £1m investing in gold between 2010 and 2011.'

DO IT NOW

Focus on building a diversified portfolio of investments and think in terms of decades, not years. Financial planner Louise Oliver, of Piercefield Oliver, says: 'As well as National Savings, cash savings and maybe Premium Bonds, think about global stocks and shares, bonds and maybe even commercial property as that has improved recently. The main thing is that you should spread the risk. That way, you're taking away some of the volatility and it's a smoother ride.' You can pay someone to invest for you, but more and more people are learning how to pick their own investments, too, by reading books and taking courses that can help you make informed choices.

How they made it

CATH KIDSTON



Opened her first store in Holland Park in 1993, using £15,000 of her own savings. Sold the majority share in the business in order to drive further expansion. Her stake is said to be around £25 million.

NET WORTH: £60 million (estimated)

DEBORAH MEADEN



Moved to Italy at 19 and, with very little capital, set up an export agency, which failed after 18 months. In the next few years she ran several small businesses. In 1999, she undertook a management buyout of Weststar Holidays, where she was MD, later selling it in a deal worth £33 million.

NET WORTH: £40 million

OPRAH WINFREY

At 19, Oprah was co-presenting the evening news at her local TV station. She then took over a low-rated morning TV show that became the station's number-one talk show. She launched her own TV channel in January 2011. Her company, Harpo, has estimated revenues of around £275 million a year.



NET WORTH: \$3 billion

JASMINE BIRTLES IS A FINANCIAL EXPERT AND THE FOUNDER OF MONEYMAGPIE.COM. PHOTOGRAPHY (POSED BY MODELS): ALAMY, GETTY, PORTRAITS: GETTY



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Smooth



Nutty

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- ☀ The new Help To Buy ISA explained
- ☀ Clear your inbox in one click
- ☀ Last-minute Christmas tips

Why you can trust GH's REVIEWS

In the wake of the VW scandal, is enough being done to ensure manufacturers' testing procedures are thorough and fair? The GHI investigates...

Since the emissions-fixing scandal of last September, when Volkswagen in the US confessed to rigging its pollution tests, the spotlight has been turned on manufacturers and their testing procedures. It's not just cars – the National Measurement and Regulation Office has found that a quarter of the 1.5 million ovens sold in the UK every year use more energy than the makers claim. And independent lab tests have found recently that some TVs in Europe appear to use less energy in official testing conditions than they do in real-world use.

While there is no suggestion that other manufacturers are acting illegally, the European Commission has said it will be looking into the issue and has pledged to tighten energy efficiency regulations. Some campaigners feel the regulations could be more rigorous. James Dyson, founder of the vacuum cleaner company, agrees. 'Regulations often offer little more than a smokescreen for manufacturers to hide behind,' he said. 'Fridges tested with no food, vacuum

cleaners tested with no dust and washing machines tested at inaccurate temperatures. It is the unsuspecting customers who are being tricked by the very regulations that are supposed to empower them.'

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

With consumer confidence at a low, it's time for test procedures, overseen by the EU Commission, to be reformed. The biggest problem is that testing is mainly carried out in labs rather than real-world situations. Vacuum cleaners, for example, lose suction as they fill with dust, so testing them empty, rather than in an environment that replicates a dusty home, means their achievements can be overstated. Other suggestions by campaigners include giving regulators more resources to do their job properly; and higher penalties for anyone cheating – with more chance of being caught.

GHI SAYS...

The good news is that here at Good Housekeeping we trial vacuum cleaners (and thousands of other products) the way you'd use them at home, under test conditions in the Good Housekeeping Institute. That way we can give you impartial reviews of everything from steam cleaners to

smartphones. Every GHI test involves a team of experts and a stack of hard work:

- * Battersea Dogs & Cats Home is our first port of call when it's time to test vacuum cleaners. The residents provide us with pet hair, which we grind into patches of carpet to truly test suction power. Then we add crushed digestive biscuits and a mix of sand and flour to give them a real challenge!
- * More than 34kg of minced beef was defrosted for our latest round of microwave testing. To check the heating capacity, we zapped 136 ready-made lasagnes, 68 bowls of tomato soup and 136 jacket potatoes!
- * Curry, mud and tomato sauce are just three of the 13 stains we use to challenge washing machines. We wash load after load on all key cycles so results are consistent.
- * When it comes to testing dishwashers, we smear lipstick, egg, spinach and porridge over a full set of plates and wine glasses to fully trial their cleaning abilities.
- * And when evaluating pushchairs, GHI researchers carry them up and down stairs and on to buses, and push them for miles. For safety reasons, in some of the tests we use sacks of potatoes instead of babies!

Look out for our impartial product reviews in the magazine and online at goodhousekeeping.co.uk.



Our state-of-the-art testing facility in London

Behind the scenes: appliances are put through their paces at the GHI



Tomato sauce, curry and mud are just some of the stains we use in our tests

I only popped in for biscuits

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of award-winning wines
and champagnes

Little. Often. Co-op.

The **co-operative** food
Here for you for life



NV Les Pionniers
Champagne



Truly Irresistible
Bio Bio Malbec

All is calm (yes, really!)

Feel like the Big Day has crept up on you? Relax, it's not too late! Just follow our advice for getting everything done, fast. Here's how to do a last-minute Christmas, GH-style...

1 Still have presents to buy? Download a Christmas shopping list app pronto, then input names and budgets and update it whenever you buy. We recommend Christmas Gift List (free on Google Play and IOS App Store). Also make sure you have easy access to the best deals when you're out shopping. We recommend the Hot UK Deals app (free on Google Play and IOS App Store), Amazon Discount Finder from MoneySavingExpert and megashopbot.com.

2 Missed the supermarket delivery slot you wanted? Check late-night slots, as they may still be available. Or try online veg box companies, such as Abel & Cole and Riverford, which sell turkey and all the trimmings at this time of year.

3 It's never too late to make your pud. Our Cheat's Christmas Pudding (see goodhousekeeping.co.uk/quick-christmas-pudding) takes 15 minutes to make and 10 minutes to cook.

4 Delegate! Book a one-off clean for around £50 for a three-bed, two-bathroom house: try handy.com. Splash out and get a professional in to blitz your oven in less than two hours, from £45 for a single oven. Find out how to choose

the best service for you at goodhousekeeping.co.uk/institute/household-advice.

5 No time to queue at the Post Office? Print off your own stamps at home, using Royal Mail's Online Postage option (parcel.royalmail.com). All you need is a pair of scales and a printer. Its UK postal deadlines this year are **Saturday 19 December** (second class); **Monday 21 December** (first class) and **Wednesday 23 December** (special delivery).

6 If writing Christmas cards is a job too far, send an e-card. We like the ones at jacquielawson.com. You can even personalise them with your own pictures (greetingsisland.com) or send a video of yourself as a dancing elf (elfyourself.com)!

7 Run out of wrap? Be creative: use fabric, wallpaper, aluminium foil, brown or greaseproof paper, tied with ribbon or garden twine. For difficult-to-wrap items, buy a stock of festive pouches, £5.50 for a pack of three, from Caroline Gardner (carolinegardner.com).

8 If you've suddenly realised you don't have enough glasses, crockery or chairs for your guests, don't buy more – hire them. Most supermarkets lend glasses for a small fee. Crockery can be hired from thecookskitchen.com from 60p for a plate. Chairs cost from £2.25 to hire from furniturehireuk.com, and tablecloths and napkins in all colours of the rainbow are available to borrow from linenforhire.co.uk. Delivery costs vary depending on location.



Keep on top of things with our tips for panic-free planning

9 For last-minute presents, Amazon, Argos and Moonpig are your best bets: they'll be doing next-day delivery up until 23 December. If it's too late even for that, buy printable theatre vouchers. And many supermarkets, open until late on 24 December, now sell gift cards for stores from Accessorize to WHSmith.

10 If it's too late to get a butcher's bird, buy a frozen turkey at least two days before Christmas to give it enough time to defrost. If you're going to be short of time on the day, a turkey crown will be quicker to cook and easier to carve than a whole bird.

For a rundown on retailers' Christmas shopping times, go to goodhousekeeping.co.uk/consumer-advice



In the bag: be creative with your wrapping



Pud, pronto: it's not too late to make your own



Luxury treat: coming to a supermarket near you

Lobster wars!

It seems you can get everything from the discount supermarkets these days – even fresh lobster. The gourmet treat is suddenly as cheap as chips. It's all down to rising sea temperatures and smaller numbers of cod (which feast on baby lobsters), which means that more lobsters are growing to full size than ever before. Cue a supermarket price war, with the likes of Aldi, Lidl and Iceland all now selling the delicacy for as little as £5 for a whole one.

If getting stuck in with hammers and claw crackers is a step too messy for you, prepared dressed lobster is the answer – and some supermarkets sell these, too. Our panel blind-tasted this year's dressed offerings to find out if low cost means low taste.

WINNER

Marks & Spencer 2 Dressed Canadian Lobster Halves

■ £22 FOR 330g

Tender, juicy and rich-tasting. Topped with a subtly spiced Marie Rose sauce and stems of asparagus: would make an impressive starter.

77/100

RUNNER UP

Waitrose Dressed Canadian Lobster

■ £22 FOR 390g

Generous helping of firm, sweet lobster meat, dressed with a delicious, delicate prawn mousse.

72/100

Morrisons Dressed Lobster

■ £12 FOR 315g

A slightly chewy lobster that tasted strongly of lemon. Our testers liked the creamy lemon mayonnaise – but there's just too much of it.

66/100

Asda Dressed Lobster Halves

■ £15 FOR 341g

The meat was dry with a tough texture, dressed in a bitter-tasting sauce. Not very nice.

57/100

A leg up the PROPERTY LADDER



From 1 December, first-time buyers can save into a new Help To Buy ISA. As well as getting tax-free interest, their savings get a 25% Government top-up. Here's how it works:

- * The annual cash ISA allowance is £15,640, but the Help To Buy ISA has a limit of £12,000 over its lifetime, although with no limit on how long it can stay open. There's a maximum monthly savings limit of £200, with an option to make an extra initial deposit of £1,000.
- * As with a cash ISA, interest earned is tax free. You can only have one Help To Buy ISA per person, but a couple with one each could use both towards a property they're buying together.
- * The maximum Government top-up you can earn is £3,000 (25%), so savers can put £12,000 into the Help To Buy ISA and come out with £15,000 towards a house deposit – plus interest.
- * You'll have to choose between a cash ISA or a Help To Buy ISA, as you can only save into one within a tax year. But you can leave money saved in existing cash ISAs.
- * The 25% payout is only awarded on purchase of a property. If you withdraw your money to spend on something else you'll just receive the balance plus interest. But don't worry if there's a delay buying the house – you'll still get the payout when you do.
- * Banks and building societies will offer their own versions and applicants will need to be aged at least 16.
- * You can only apply if this is your first home purchase, and buy-to-let properties don't qualify.
- * You can open a Help To Buy ISA any time from 1 December 2015 until December 2019.



Helping hand: first-time buyers could gain an extra £3,000



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Unsubscribing from junk emails one by one is a tedious business. Instead, download Unlistr: it scans your inbox and lets you mark senders as junk, then automatically unsubscribes you from their emails. All you need is your IMAP or POP3 setting from your email provider. Unlistr Pro costs from £4.49 for 12 months, from unlistr.com. □

FEATURE: HELEN WAINWRIGHT; VICTORIA CROWE; NATHALIE BONNEY; JOANNE FINNEY; CARRIE ANN SKINNER; PHOTOGRAPHY: SHANNON GREER/HEARST MAGAZINES UK; MEGAN TAYLOR/HEARST MAGAZINES UK; JESSICA ALEXANDER/HEARST MAGAZINES UK; ALAMY; GETTY

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HOW TO KEEP GLAM

and carry on!



Add it up: the clothes in your wardrobe amount to a sizeable investment. Keep them looking good for longer with our Tried & Tested guide to mending, washing and storing...

* YOUR EMERGENCY CLOTHES RESCUE KIT *

* Blitz the bobbles



GH TIP Remove with sticky tape or a gadget such as d-Fuzz-it Sweater & Fabric Comb (£5.95; amazon.co.uk). Try washing bobble-prone garments inside out on a delicate cycle with reduced spin. Fabric conditioner also helps.



* Love leather

GH TIP Clean leather handbags regularly with shoe polish, but use neutral rather than coloured varieties, which could rub off on clothing.



* Mysterious white specks?

GH TIP This is probably a build-up of washing detergent or limescale, particularly if you live in a hard water area. Rewash on as high a temperature as the garment allows with the correct dosage of detergent. If you have hard water, carry out an empty wash periodically using just white vinegar or a proprietary machine cleaner, such as Dr Beckmann Service-It Deep Clean Washing Machine (£2.99; dr-beckmann.co.uk), to stop limescale build-up.

* Keep up!



GH TIP For a loose hem, use iron-on hemming tape (£1; johnlewis.com) or fabric glue such as Bostik All Purpose Glue (£1.50; sainsburys.co.uk). Edges fraying? Try Fray Check (£5.04; amazon.co.uk), a quick-fix liquid that strengthens and binds fabrics.



* Don't fade away

GH TIP Use a colour detergent to stop colour fading.



* Going grey?

GH TIP Wash as hot as the garment allows using the correct dosage of biological detergent. Then soak in a diluted bleach solution and rinse thoroughly.



* Silk solutions

GH TIP Hand wash with a non-bio detergent or, if the care label allows, machine wash on the delicates cycle. Use fabric conditioner in the final rinse. Roll up in a clean, dry towel and squeeze lightly. Iron on cool while still damp.

* Shoe time!



GH TIP Spray new pairs of leather or suede shoes with a waterproof protector, such as Nikwax (£6; millets.co.uk). Clean leather shoes regularly with the same colour of shoe polish and always give them a good buff.



* Cashmere care

GH TIP Hand wash carefully in warm water or machine wash on the wool programme with a detergent specifically for delicates. Do not rub, wring or twist. Dry flat between two towels, pulling gently to the correct shape while damp. Never tumble-dry. Some garments are dry-clean only, so check the care label.



GHI GO-TO STAIN BUSTER GUIDE

COFFEE WITH MILK

Blot as much of the stain as possible with white paper towels, then rinse under cold running water. For cotton, follow with a 40°C biological wash. For wool, after rinsing, soak in a cool solution of washing soda crystals, then hand-wash in lukewarm water and leave to dry.

CURRY Using white paper towels, absorb as much of the stain as you can. Apply methylated spirits and leave for a few minutes. Blot with white paper towels to remove as much of the colour as possible. Flush with cold water, then apply a mild detergent solution and allow to soak for a few minutes, then machine wash at as high a temperature as

the garment allows. If traces remain, place item in direct sunlight for a few days – the stain may lighten further.

FATS, GREASE AND OILS

Sprinkle talcum powder or cornflour over the stain. Leave for 5min, then remove with a soft brush. For cotton, rub in a little washing-up liquid, then machine wash at 40°C with biological detergent. **RED WINE** Flush the area with cool water. Spray liberally with hairspray, then blot remaining colour. Machine wash at 40°C with biological detergent.

★ See goodhousekeeping.co.uk/institute for more stainbusting advice and product reviews

5 WARDROBE BASICS

how to store clothes

- ★ Practical rather than pretty, Caraselle non-slip hangers (caraselledirect.com) are ideal for loose knits and silky blouses.
- ★ Before putting clothes away, air them thoroughly overnight.
- ★ Moths are particularly fond of natural fibres, such as wool and silk, and are attracted to sweat and dirt. To stop them feasting on your favourite jumper, use cedar and lavender spray in wardrobes and drawers as a natural repellent (available from theholdingcompany.co.uk). Vacuum the inside of your wardrobe and drawers regularly.
- ★ Don't cram your wardrobe and drawers full. Keep clothes well ventilated – air should be able to

circulate freely to help moisture evaporate.

- ★ Use Pack-Mate Anti Mould Flat Vac Bags (from £8.96; lakeland.co.uk) for a compact way to stow away your Winter wardrobe.

Give your garments a helping hand



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BEST WASHING MACHINE

Siemens iQ700 WM14Y891GB/37
£759; thegasuperstore.co.uk

Out of 29 tested, this model had excellent stain removal results across all cycles and is also low on electricity and water consumption (15.7p per average cycle).
90/100



BEST TUMBLE DRYER

Bosch TY86790GB
£799.99; electricaldiscountuk.co.uk

Dried clothing evenly, even on maximum capacity, and was fairly low on energy consumption (24.5p per average cycle) compared with the other 24 models tested.
81/100



BEST IRON

Morphy Richards Comfigrip Steam Iron
Ionic TriZone Soleplate 301011
£42; tescodirect.com

Top of the 69 models we tested, this performed well on a variety of materials, removing creases easily. The tank lasted for over 20 minutes of continuous ironing.
88/100



BEST IRONING BOARD

Lakeland In Bloom
£35.99; amazon.co.uk

Best of the 24 we tested. Height can be adjusted easily between 50-97cm, and it has a good-sized ironing area. The cover is tight and doesn't move during ironing, but is removable and machine washable.
87/100



BEST STEAMER

Salamandres Professional Clothes Steamer M503

£89.90; salamandres-steamers.co.uk

This was our top scorer out of seven tested. This powerful steamer removed creases easily, has a practical clip-on hanger for clothes and heats up quickly.
88/100 □

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ALL DAY



energy

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If only, we hear you mutter... But running on empty isn't an inevitable consequence of age, hormones, or trying to be all things to all people. We've talked to experts – and women who positively fizz with vitality – to find out how to switch on your energy

Stressful work projects, illness and relationship problems... We all recognise the big energy drains, but little things can also push our power bar up or down, says psychologist and energy expert Wendy Shooter. She specialises in helping individuals and businesses find their mojo, and has identified four key areas that we all need to focus on.



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[CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE]

Exercise in the early morning to get your body going



Exercise pioneer, hands-on granny and bestselling author Lynne Robinson, 61, credits Pilates, a 10-minute nap after lunch and plenty of nuts and seeds in her diet for her boundless energy: 'In my 40s, I was overweight and plagued with back pain that sapped my energy and my mood. Pilates turned things around for me. It gets the blood flowing, keeps you in the present moment and clears the brain fog. It's like splashing your face with cold water.'

MENTAL FOCUS AND PROBLEM SOLVING

When your mental power bar is high, you can concentrate and think clearly. When it's running low, you rapidly feel overwhelmed, indecisive and become stuck in circular thinking.

● **Flick the switch:** Take five minutes to reflect on the day's achievements so far (however small). Catch any negative thoughts and reframe them, then make a plan for the rest of the day or tomorrow and take positive action.

● **Avoid the energy drains:** Stay on top of clutter and disorganisation – tackle piles of unpaid bills, admin waiting to be addressed. Avoid too much multi-tasking

that stops you from focusing properly and guard against repetitive thinking.

EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE

This helps us stay in touch with our creative, generous side when things don't go our way. When your power bar is high you will feel calm, patient, able to listen to others and be co-operative. When it dips, you start feeling impatient, irritable and anxious.

● **Flick the switch:** We get a positive energy payback from showing appreciation for someone else, even in small ways. So give way when you're driving, let someone go through a door or get in the lift first, or just make eye contact and smile more at others.

● **Avoid the energy drains:** Resist giving in to feeling unappreciated, suppressing your real feelings or focusing on what others haven't done/are not giving you.

A POSITIVE SPIRIT

When it's high, spiritual energy leaves you feeling enthusiastic and inspired. When it's drained you can feel apathetic, ineffective and not valued by others.

● **Flick the switch:** Focus on doing things you love – tot up the time you spend each week on things that feed your soul. Each night, write down what you enjoyed that day.

● **Avoid the energy drains:** Being in the wrong job or task, spending time with people you don't click with or who drain your energy, or being sucked in to things that you don't want to do can all zap your spirits.

PHYSICAL STRENGTH

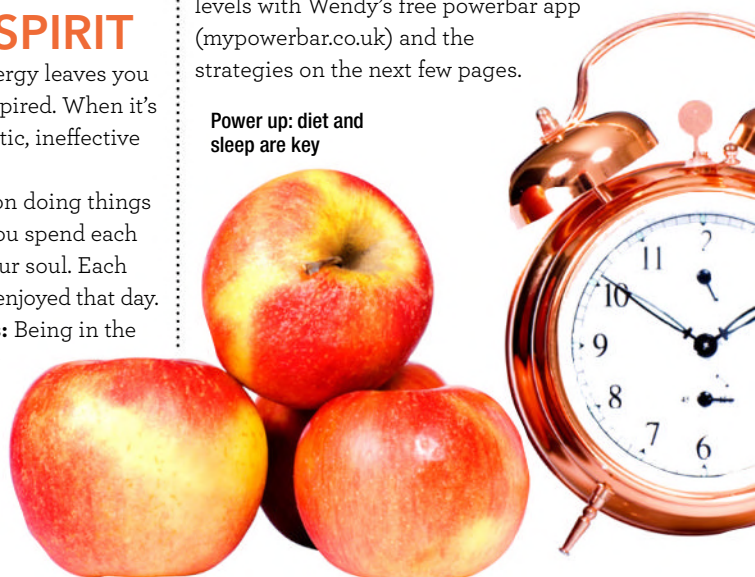
Our physical vitality is probably the area we focus on most. When it's high, you're on top of the world – you feel like you are firing on all cylinders, alive and ready to go. When it drops you feel tired, weak, achey and unwell.

● **Flick the switch:** A good night's sleep is vital to maintain physical energy. Add more fruit and veg to your diet, and drink at least a litre and a half of fluids each day, too.

● **Avoid the energy drains:** Skipping sleep, too much processed/junk food and lack of exercise will all take their toll.

When you're low on energy in one area, you're more likely to take a hit in another, leading to a downward spiral. Wendy's message is that we all need to become our own experts in tracking our energy levels, so we can anticipate and compensate for the dips. Try monitoring your energy levels with Wendy's free powerbar app (mypowerbar.co.uk) and the strategies on the next few pages.

Power up: diet and sleep are key



In the past two years, beauty guru and mum of five Liz Earle, 52, has founded an international charity and launched a new wellbeing website, as well as running her organic farm in Somerset. So how does she do it? 'I now book in a regular 5pm Friday slot, when I either go Nordic walking or have a reflexology session. It helps redress the balance of a hectic week – and starts my wind-down to the weekend!'

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RE-INVIGORATE YOUR DAY

Everyone's energy levels rise and fall throughout the day. Here's how to spot those danger points and find ways to stay on track.

7am Rise and shine

How you cope first thing depends very much on whether you are naturally a lark, who bounds out of bed ready to face the day, or an owl who could happily lie there for another hour and struggles to crawl out from under the duvet.

If you're an owl

Try a wake-up light like Lumie Bodyclock that simulates natural light. This stimulates the production of your body's get-up-and-go hormones and suppresses the melatonin that brings on sleep.

Start with the Pilates 100 to energise your whole body

- Lie on your back, knees bent, feet hip-width apart and parallel. Your pelvis should be level, with your spine retaining its natural curves and your arms by your sides, palms down. Take a few wide breaths into the back and sides of your ribcage. On an out breath, connect to your core muscles, gently drawing up your pelvic floor (back to front) inside like an internal zip.
- Breathe in. As you breathe out, slowly curl up through your upper spine, lifting your head and raising your arms slightly off the floor.
- Breathe in for a count of five while beating your arms up and down five times, ensuring the movement comes from your shoulders. Stay curled up and focus on breathing into the back of your ribcage. Curl back down if

you feel any strain in your neck.

- Breathe out for a count of five while continuing to beat your arms. Stay curled up and focus on exhaling fully.
- Repeat up to 10 times (100 arm beats), then breathe in and stop beating your arms but remain curled up. Breathe out and slowly curl back down.

If you're a lark

Get active first thing, especially if you struggle to maintain an exercise habit – researchers found that exercising first thing before other commitments intrude helps you to keep it going. University of Bristol researchers found that employees who exercised before going to work – or during lunchbreaks – were better equipped to handle what the day threw at them.

8am Early morning booster

Sit-down breakfast or coffee on the go?

We wake up dehydrated with low blood sugar, and this means low energy. Have a high-energy breakfast combining protein and slow-release carbs – poached egg on wholemeal toast, or porridge, fruit and yogurt.

If you can't face breakfast, at least have some orange juice to rehydrate, and take your coffee outside for 10 minutes in natural light, which stimulates production of the feelgood hormone serotonin.

11am Avoid the mid-morning slump

Coffee and a biscuit may seem the perfect quick fix, especially if you skipped breakfast, but you'll crash and burn quickly afterwards. Replace sugary snacks with fresh fruit, a handful of nuts and seeds or a few squares of 70% chocolate – a recent study found that people who did this ate 18% fewer calories at lunchtime.

1pm Lunchtime booster

Think high protein/low (not no!) carbs to

Beat the post-lunch dip with plenty of protein

combat the post-lunch energy dip. Swap the pasta salad for a tuna salad with a small wholegrain roll, the big baked potato with a sprinkling of cheese for a small one with baked beans and a regular sandwich for an open one.

Get outside for a walk. Research shows that natural light increases attention and alertness during the post-lunch dip, and even a short walk will boost your heart rate and increase the flow of oxygen around the body.

3pm Beat the afternoon crash

Energy and concentration levels typically peak around noon, then start to drop after lunch, reaching their lowest point mid-afternoon when we're hardwired to feel sleepy. If you can take a 20-minute nap, go ahead, but if that's not possible:

- Stand up and move around to kickstart your metabolism and get the oxygen flowing.
- Stretch out – sit on the edge of your chair, clasp your hands behind your back, open up your chest and shoulders and then inhale and exhale several times. Release and repeat three to four times.
- Have a latte (as long as you haven't been drinking coffee all morning). The caffeine will give you a boost and the milk will combat any hunger pangs.
- Gillian Berry of the British Acupuncture Council suggests this simple technique to restore energy levels: Gently massage the inner part of both heels. Place the tips of your fingers on the area just between the ankle bone and the hard

Can't face breakfast?
At least have a little
orange juice



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The zest essential:
make sure you get a
good night's sleep

ridge of the Achilles tendon and massage gently for a couple of minutes on each foot. Doing this will help to keep your energy flowing freely when you feel tired.

6PM Evening energiser

We get our second peak of energy and alertness in the early evening, and this is the ideal time to exercise, as it is also when your muscle tone and flexibility are at their peak. Regular exercise is a powerful energiser, as it spurs the development of mitochondria, the powerhouses of your body's cells, which convert the energy stored in foods into a form the cells can use.

8-9PM The evening wind-down

Sleep is the universal energiser, and without enough your reserves will be low. Research shows that even partial sleep deprivation has potentially negative impacts on how your body regulates energy.

- Reverse the lunchtime ratios with a high carb/low protein supper to help induce sleepiness. Avoid caffeine and stick to one alcoholic drink, and have it early in the evening.
- Wind down for an hour before bed – write tomorrow's to-do list if it helps you clear your head, or have a warm bath.
- Avoid electronic equipment for a quiet mind. Information overload increases the production of stress hormones and overloads your brain, which can interfere with restful sleep. Leave your phone/tablet in another room, too, as the blue light these emit can hinder the release of the sleep hormone melatonin.



My light bulb moment

Now 72, Eddie Brocklesby is one of the oldest woman triathletes in the UK. Two years ago she launched Silverfit (silverfit.org.uk), a charity that helps people maintain their fitness as they get older: 'Staying active and with other people is how I keep my energy levels high. My husband died when I was 52 and running kept me going. I would always come back feeling more in control. My two sons and I recently completed the New York Triathlon.'

EAT FOR VITALITY

Try these diet tweaks for extra zest



PLAN FOR THREE MEALS A DAY

with healthy snacks if you need them, says nutritionist Amanda Ursell. 'What you eat for one meal will affect what you eat for the next – and your

energy levels in between. If you start with junk, you're more likely to eat it for the rest of the day. Reaching for the biscuits mid-morning after no breakfast isn't about a lack of willpower, it's because of a biochemical reaction in your body. When your blood sugar is in your boots, you need a quick fix.'



STOCK UP ON THE ENERGY NUTRIENTS.

Low iron levels are a problem for at least one in 10 of us, and can leave you fatigued and lethargic. Good sources are lean meat, liver and egg yolks, but dried fruit, tofu, nuts and kidney beans also contain iron. If you're concerned, ask

your GP for a blood test. Vitamin D is an energy booster thought to enhance the activity of mitochondria in the body's cells, but 60% of us have low levels in the Winter months. If you can't get to any Winter sun, up your intake of oily fish, egg yolks and fortified cereals, and take a supplement. Vitamin B12 (in meat and dairy products) and folate (in leafy green vegetables, chickpeas and liver) are also vital – a deficiency can leave you with low energy, pins and needles and muscle weakness. Vegans and anyone with a poor diet may be at risk.



RE-HYDRATE.

'All our body's chemical reactions take place in water, and if we don't have enough our brain shrinks a little,' says Christina Middleton of Nutritionist Resources. Dehydration affects your energy levels, mood and concentration, so aim for at least 1.2 litres of fluid a day.



Snack on fruit
and nuts for
energy-boosting
nutrients

FEELING BLUE MAKES YOU TIRED

A low mood leaves you lacking in energy, which drags you down – it rapidly becomes a vicious circle. If your tiredness is due to a low mood, you will probably also feel sad, listless and overwhelmed by life. Whether your depression is caused by stress, difficult life events or a chemical imbalance, don't just live with it. See your doctor, who may prescribe regular exercise, a talking therapy or, in some cases, anti-depressants. □



These are some of the biggest health trends for 2016 – from back-friendly standing desks to drinking your vegetables and skipping showers. But bottom line: do they work? Step forward our five intrepid health guinea pigs who agreed to try them out and report back. The results make fascinating reading...

New health game changers

Tried & Tested

gs.net

'I ate more to lose weight'

Good Housekeeping's Jessica Callan ate five times a day as part of a weight-loss plan to see if it could help her shape up – and get healthy.

'My inspiration was GH columnist Sandi Toksvig, as this eating plan led to her not just losing five stone but reclaiming her body.

Devised by weight-loss expert Louise Parker, the idea behind this way of eating is to spread calories evenly across the day and eat every few hours to stabilise blood sugar levels, boost your metabolism and ensure you burn fat rather than muscle.

After having my daughter nearly four years ago, I managed to lose some of my pregnancy weight, but when I turned 40 last year, I was at my heaviest. I felt bloated, tired and fed up with promising myself I would sort out my unhealthy food choices and chocolate binges. Plus, I have high blood pressure, and diabetes runs in my family, and I definitely want to swerve that.

With the Louise Parker Method, I was assigned my own dietician, and had weekly consultations to go over my food diary and help me stay motivated. I was weighed and measured every other week and taught eating habits designed to last me a lifetime. Never one willingly to skip a meal, I was delighted to discover I could eat three meals a day and two snacks – and that it wasn't a carb-free/dairy-free/bread-free faddy regime, either.

Instead, I was given a binder full of fantastic recipe ideas – without a chia seed or kale leaf in sight – and nothing took more than 15 minutes to cook.

Truthfully, the only time I felt hungry was around my mid-morning or mid-afternoon snack. Apparently it's combining food groups, sticking to low glycemic index (GI) foods and eating protein at every meal that I have to thank for giving me a metabolic uplift, which helps me feel full and satisfied.

So what did I eat? Breakfast was a portion of protein (scrambled eggs/Greek yogurt), a portion of low GI carb, such as toast or oatbran, and a piece of fruit or veg. For lunch and dinner I'd have protein again (chicken/fish/lamb/goat's cheese), three to four portions of vegetables and salads and one portion of fat, such as mixed seeds or olive/sesame/walnut oil. I was also allowed two snacks: one protein and one low GI carb. Favourites were an apple and a small piece of cheddar, a pear and 12 almonds, or a slice of prosciutto and two figs.

I also started seeing a personal trainer at my local gym twice a week, focusing on high-intensity exercise and weights.

By the end of the 12 weeks, I had lost a total of 24 pounds and had gone from a size 14 to an eight but, more importantly, my metabolic age had dropped from 52 to 32 – if it's higher than your real age it can mean health problems. I also lost a total of 14 centimetres from my abdomen, 10 from my hips and nine from my waist.

I'm now living their 80:20 plan, so I stick to the plan 80% of the time and

I can still have a slice of chocolate cake with my daughter and crispy potatoes with my Sunday roast guilt free, without letting the weight creep back on. So far, so good.'

ON TEST Louise Parker's Optimum Weight Loss programme. Call 0203 427 5863 or visit louiseparker.uk.com. Follow her on @figuremagician.

BEFORE



Jess: 'Weekly consultations helped keep me motivated'

AFTER



My new menu

BREAKFAST



Messy Eggs make a protein-packed breakfast



Milly's Strawberry and Oatbran Bircher is low GI

LUNCH



Goat's Cheese Salad – my favourite lunch



Chopped Chicken Salad is easy to make with leftovers

DINNER



Steak and Green Beans is a great restaurant option, too



Louise's Lovely Lentils can also be a quick lunch choice

SNACKS



Pear and 12 almonds



Apple slices and cheese

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 **NatWest**

'I tracked my every move'

We set Emma Hutton, 44, the challenge of living a healthier life with wearable tech to spur her on.

Like most women, I know all the things I should be doing daily – eating well, moving more – but somehow life seems to get in the way. So when my new high-tech health and fitness tracker arrives, I realise there's nowhere to hide. Strapped to my wrist, the Fitbit knows everything. Not just how many steps I've taken, the distance I've walked, the stairs I've climbed and how hard I'm really pushing myself on workouts, but it monitors how long I've slept and even how well. Heck, it even sends virtual 'badges' via its app when I hit health and fitness milestones like taking 10,000 steps or getting enough sleep, so I'm always in the know.

But what's it like having an electronic personal trainer, nutritionist and sleep monitor watching you 24/7?

Well, the first thing you need to know is that tracking your wellbeing is addictive. From day one, I was late for everything because I kept walking everywhere and getting off the bus or train one, two, or three stops earlier, just so I could sneak in some extra steps. And I got a healthy happy high when the device buzzed to me to let me know I'd reached the 10,000 steps that the health experts recommend – even more so when it was only 3pm. On days when I didn't hit my goal, I felt deflated. Falling short of the recommended figure made me think about what I could have done differently. Should I have taken the

stairs instead of the lift? What could I do tomorrow so my weekly health report would still be glowing?

It also gets you focused on tackling bad habits. Finding out I was only getting an average of six hours' sleep a night and a mere 4 hours 23 minutes on some nights, rather than the eight hours' sleep experts say is optimum, inspired me to switch off the TV and lights earlier. Although I'm not convinced the sleep tracker is 100% accurate, being informed I was briefly waking on average nine times a night made me marvel at all the things it 'knew' about me.

Telling the app what I ate was eye-opening, too. Noting my meals and snacks with the app – so that it could calculate how many calories I was eating versus how many I was burning – made me question my food choices. I'm not trying to lose weight and have never counted calories, but this simple act made me realise I could try harder to eat nutrient-rich foods. My biggest revelation was about wine. Who knew liquid calories could add up to so much?

The Fitbit has also been valuable in reminding me what really counts – that I don't need a gym membership to be healthy, but that everyday activity, eating and lifestyle choices really do add up.'

ON TEST Fitbit Surge Fitness Tracker, £199.99, fitbit.com.uk

'I stood up all day'

After years of lower back pain from slouching in front of a screen, Beth Atkins, 41, tried a more upright way of working.

The headlines suggest that sitting all day slumped in front of a computer is causing a sedentary lifestyle, poor posture, painful orthopaedic complaints (including the charmingly dubbed ihump), as well as likely shortening our lives by impeding circulation – and I'm guilty as charged.

I'm glued to working at my computer for a minimum of eight hours a day, with only quick trips to the loo, kettle or biscuit tin to remind myself I have legs, and being a desk slave has played havoc with my back, thanks to poor posture painfully pushing apart certain vertebrae and compressing others. This now means that sitting for more than half an hour at a time can be a

real pain in the bum – literally. As a result, long car journeys and trips to the cinema are agonising. I don't sleep well and, on some bad days, it hurts to sit down.

So is a standing desk the cure? Well, it's been two weeks and I'm using my raised workstation as I write – in fact, I'm standing on one leg like a flamingo. And I like it. I'm a fidgeter, so being able to shift from foot to foot is liberating. I find myself stretching every so often, even doing squats and lunges as I type away.

The biggest surprise is that standing up seems really to have boosted my concentration. I have no idea why, but I feel more alert, lighter and more energised. Maybe it's down to improved circulation? Plus, whenever I do sit now, I'm more mindful of my posture, engaging my abs (which have been switched on all day), rather than slumping in front of the telly.

However, the real bonus is that the pain in my lower back has eased considerably. No more nagging aches during the day, or restless nights. I could well have saved myself a fortune in osteopath bills. So, even though I'm not in love with the look of the thing (the black officey angles look harsh in the mellow surroundings of my otherwise cosy home office), it's staying. And so is the lighter-on-her-toes me. In fact, the other day I read about treadmill desks. Admittedly, that could be one new trend that's a step too far, but never say never...

ON TEST Varidesk Pro 30, £325, uk.varidesk.com



Emma (left) donned her trainers and made every step count



'I drank a daily salad'

We asked Sarah Willard, 45, to give up her morning cereal and toast and instead turn salads into smoothies to see if would recharge her health.

The buzz phrase for health drinks in 2016 is 'eat fruit, drink veg' – and I get the logic. I've never had any problems eating my way through the contents of a fruit bowl and have been alarmed at headlines of how sugary fruit smoothies and juices can be. On the flip side, I struggle to get through the nutrient-packed veggies in my salad drawer, so making salad slurps seems like a good way to use them.

Like a lot of people's, my breakfast isn't going to win any nutritional awards. It's heavy on sugary, processed cereals and light on my five-a-day, so I'll be having my salad drink then. To make it, I've armed myself with a Nutribullet, which allows you to bung in whole veg – leaves, peel, core, skin, the lot – and pulverise it to a super-smooth blend.

On the first morning, I throw in kale, lettuce, cucumber, celery and ginger for flavour, plus a little water. Although having a whizzed-up, undressed salad for breakfast sounds virtuous, it tastes of ginger-flavoured lawnmower clippings. Suddenly, my cereal doesn't seem so bad after all.

Day two, I use a recipe I find online consisting of half an avocado, a handful of spinach, some cucumber, a few cashews and a tiny bit of mango – and it's a different story. Thanks to the ripe avocado and smidgen of mango, it tastes refreshing, not revolting. Better still, the fat in the avocado and protein from the nuts leave me energised, not feeling like I need a nap by midday, as my normal breakfast does. It must also be the filling fibre – the speed at which I need to get to the loo

afterwards certainly suggested so.

Day three, with an everything-but-the-kitchen-sink concoction of kale, spinach, romaine, celery, cucumber, iceberg and apple, I have another realisation. Starting your day with foods that help you hit your five-a-day has a snowball effect. It makes me think more about what I'm having for lunch (would veggie soup be better than a panini?) and inspires me to include more vegetables at family mealtimes, too.

By the fourth day (carrot, apple, celery and a little orange), I'm fully in my groove – and I'm starting to enjoy my new way of starting the day. Not surprisingly, the tastier the salad drink, the happier I am drinking it. I get more confident with my concoctions (hello, beetroot), plus I'm finding that by adding a little citrus like oranges, lemon or lime, or a tiny amount of spice like ginger or nutmeg, you can make the sourest of green vegetables palatable. Coconut milk instead of tap water makes another tasty addition.

Okay, so drinking salads may not seem the most normal way to start the day, but I'll tell you what is: not having to lie down on your bed to get your jeans buttoned up. I definitely feel de-puffed, perhaps because I'm eating less salt by skipping the cereal and toast, and so retaining less water. And although my two-week challenge is now up, I'll keep making a daily salad slurp.

But the biggest surprise is that I've started waking up and looking forward to spinach for breakfast. Words I never thought I'd hear myself say.

ON TEST Nutribullet, £99, buynutribullet.co.uk

'I stopped showering'

A brave Debbie Barton, 53, agreed to ditch her daily ablutions to see if washing less would result in glowing skin and glossy hair.

Your daily shower is bad for you, or so say some dermatologists who argue that too-frequent lathering could strip the skin of moisture and natural oils. And

although I love my shower, I do think there's something in it. In my 20s, when I had eczema and was advised to give up daily hot baths and long showers that could inflame my skin, cutting back worked wonders. But as for the trend of turning your back on shampoo (dubbed the 'no-poo' movement), I'm not convinced it will make my hair healthier.

There was no way I'd dare do this challenge during a normal working week, so I saved the experiment for a camping holiday in Wales. But despite being in nature, it didn't make it any easier. Not one bit.

From day one I felt grubby, and by day three even more so (as well as itchy, self-conscious and paranoid). I was hoping I'd find the experience liberating, but I didn't. I was too worried that I was beginning to pong to congratulate myself on how I'd saved 10 minutes in the morning and a bit of water. Also having a sink wash and using a wet flannel for a cursory once over didn't make me feel as fresh as I had hoped. Nothing could shake off the weird cocktail-like smell of Welsh lakes, wetsuit and sweat I'd developed. My family didn't think I was whiffy, but I felt whiffy – and that was all that mattered.

Soon, my daughter was begging me to wash my hair. The theory behind the no-poo movement is that shampoo strips hair of its natural oils, which prompts the scalp to generate more oils to replace them. So by not shampooing the scalp, your hair eventually returns to a natural, healthy balance. But, to be honest, I wasn't willing to wait any longer to see if this might be true. My short, fine hair looked like an oil slick and my scalp felt incredibly itchy, too.

My skin wasn't looking any better either. I'd have hoped to see some benefits – even just softer elbows, knees or ankles – but no. In fact, because I wasn't showering, my skin looked duller, as anything on the skin's surface hadn't been exfoliated or washed away.

By day five, I threw in the towel. Some people might notice a benefit to their hair and skin, but still, I'd rather lather up than have a five-minute lie-in.' ❑

Say no to showering? 'No thanks!' says Debbie



The easy way to fit in your five-a-day?





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**Based on average consumer loading.

†377 UK shoppers surveyed, Sep '14 - Jan '15

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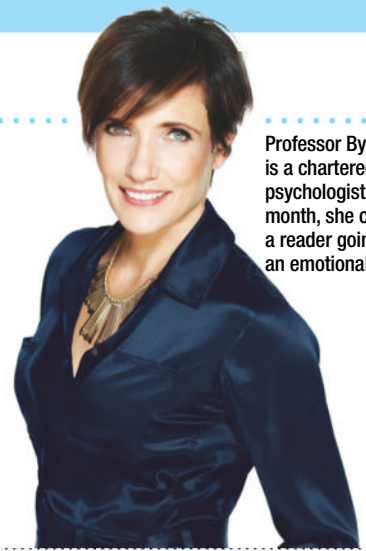
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PROBLEM SHARED

with Professor Tanya Byron

Dear Tanya My husband's flirting is driving me mad



Professor Byron is a chartered clinical psychologist. Each month, she counsels a reader going through an emotional crisis.

Next month, my husband and I will celebrate our 25th anniversary. He is a charismatic man and has always been a flirt – often in front of me when we go out. As I get older (we're both 53), I'm finding it increasingly difficult to cope with. Where once I could ignore it or laugh it off, now I find it hurtful. I have tried to discuss this with him but he says it's harmless and I should lighten up.

T ANYA SAYS
It's obvious that the public flirting you were once able to tolerate has now become a problem for you. To raise it with your husband was the right thing to do, but his response shows he hasn't understood how deeply you have been affected. He now needs to think about his behaviour without brushing off your expressed concerns.

Why has this become an issue now? Could it be that when you were younger, you were more confident in yourself and your body and so did not allow the flirting to threaten you? You may have thought that however another woman responded to him, you were and always would be the woman he was with and was intimate with. However, as you age and feel less confident in your body, things change and it's common for women to have crises of confidence at significant biological and psychological times of life – post birth, post illness, during and after the menopause, for example.

I suspect that your husband's behaviour highlights two issues that need to be addressed. First, there is how you think about yourself, how you feel about your body and any changes you may be

experiencing. Second, you may feel that at your husband's age (and your own) flirting with other women is demeaning both to you and to him. This position sounds rather critical of him, but to explain it would not only help your husband truly understand how his behaviour shakes your confidence but also how he may now be perceived less as fun and flirty and more as lecherous.

I wonder how your husband would feel if you decided to engage in public flirting with other men in front of him? Would he find it amusing and perhaps even arousing (some couples do), and enjoy the fact that he was the one you went home with, despite having stoked the desires of other men? Or would he find your behaviour an affront to his masculinity, disrespectful of your relationship and perhaps even an indirect indication that he is not sufficiently attractive to you? It might be worth asking him this. You may also want to help him understand more clearly why now, after years of tolerating this behaviour in him, you have had enough.

To really help him appreciate how

insecure and consequently angry this now makes you feel, you may need to spend time thinking about your body, how it is changing and how you feel about that. This is harder to achieve because it requires you to be more open and vulnerable than you may feel comfortable with. It might be useful thinking about

ways to feel less anxious and more confident. Exercise and dance can help you create a new and respectful relationship with your body, and lift your mood. New hobbies may give you fresh horizons to focus on, to stimulate your mind and re-ignite your confidence.

Fundamentally, this is a discussion you need to continue having with your husband: one that doesn't come from anger but is an assertively honest expression

of why this behaviour now has to stop. You have laughed it off for many years and have been able to tolerate your husband's need for flirtatious gratification. Now it is time for the roles to reverse. He needs to understand your needs and respect them fully. □

“
How would he
feel if you
flirted with
other men in
front of him?
”

Want to ask Tanya a question? Email ghask.tanya@hearst.co.uk or write to: Ask Tanya,

Good Housekeeping, 72 Broadwick Street, London W1F 9EP. We regret we are usually unable to respond to letters individually.

Love laughter

Have the confidence to enjoy those laugh-out-loud moments with family and friends – it's one of life's greatest pleasures



Enjoying a good laugh with loved ones was named as the biggest confidence-boost by two thirds of women*

Whether it's having a giggle watching a film with your husband or crying with laughter catching up with your best friend, we all enjoy a good laugh.

However, new research shows that many women avoid situations that might lead them to laugh. According to the TENA Lady 2015 Never Be Afraid To Laugh survey, one in three women said bladder weakness makes them feel self-conscious about laughing when they're around other people. And as up to half of women in the UK experience bladder weakness*, they're not alone.

The good news is that it doesn't have to be that way. TENA Lady is the UK's number one bladder weakness brand** and has designed products specially to offer Triple Protection from leaks, odour and moisture.

With TENA Lady's range of pad products, you can laugh your heart out – just pop one in your bag and feel free to enjoy life.

BE YOURSELF

Bladder weakness is common, but of course it doesn't have to stop you from living life to the full. The TENA Lady range of products all offer you the reassurance and confidence you need to keep being you, so that you need never be afraid to enjoy laughing. Visit tena.co.uk for more information and a free sample.



HEALTH NEWS

This month's round-up of the latest issues

Boost your resolve for the year ahead

Want to be leaner, fitter or calmer by July? Making a New Year's resolution means you're 10 times more likely to reach your goal in six months, says psychology professor John Norcross – so follow these golden rules:

- ◆ **Rewire your brain.** Keep its reward centre happy by swapping an unhelpful habit for a healthy one. Research at Tufts University shows that the brain can be trained to crave nutritious food instead of junk in just two weeks.
- ◆ **Keep it real.** Set a maximum of two achievable goals and tackle them in small, positive steps. If your aims reinforce each other – walking more and eating fruit instead of cake, say – so much the better.
- ◆ **Find an AB.** You need an 'accountability buddy' who'll cheer you on. Just three phone calls to a friend with the same

Make realistic plans to achieve your goals



aims is enough, says Norcross. If no one springs to mind, a supportive group or a fitness app is fine.

DID YOU KNOW?

Good news for the time poor: just six minutes of vigorous exercise before meals may fend off diabetes. Better still, it works even if you're unfit, according to a recent study, which adds to the mounting evidence that high-intensity interval training really can change metabolism. But as it involves working flat-out, albeit for one minute at a time, at 90% of your maximum heart rate, it's not for everyone. If you want to give it a go, have a medical and find a trained instructor first.

Bag a health bargain

We're all for hitting the sales but, for lasting value, here are some great buys to improve your wellbeing:

- ◆ **The right pillow keeps your head and spine in alignment,** says physio Sammy Margo. Plump pillows support the neck if you sleep on your side, thin ones are best for back-sleepers and if you sleep on your front, you won't need one.

- ◆ **Walking boots or shoes are as vital as a 4x4** when going off-road. Supportive but flexible waterproof styles (the Ramblers recommends Gore-Tex) are a good all-round choice. Or go to goodhousekeeping/institute to check out our test results.

- ◆ **Quality non-stick pans** – the GHI recommends Tefal's Ingenio range.

Cheap ones are more likely to overheat, releasing polymer fumes that can cause sickness.

Alternatively, choose pans with ceramic linings.

Pillow talk: give your bedroom a makeover that helps you sleep better, too



5 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR FAMILY'S HEALTH IN JANUARY

1 Wash your hands more often. A programme reminding people to do just that found participants had a 20% lower risk of flu. Aim for 10 times a day, say researchers.

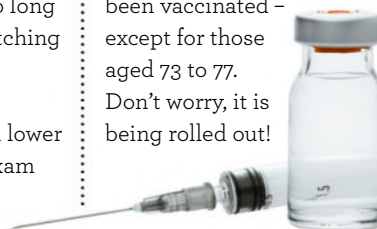


Wash away your flu risk

2 Snack on dates. The best are juicy Medjools, which are naturally sweet and packed with fibre and heart-friendly potassium.

3 Set a New Year screen limit of two hours a day, tops. Studies show that spending too long online or watching TV can raise kids' blood pressure and lower teenagers' exam results.

4 Stop shingles in seniors. The shingles jab is now offered to people in their 70s who haven't yet been vaccinated – except for those aged 73 to 77. Don't worry, it is being rolled out!



5 Ask your man to save a life. Blood cancer charities are desperate to recruit men as potential stem cell donors – currently two-thirds of those who volunteer are women. Contact delete.bloodcancer.org.uk. □

Over 70? Ask about a shingles jab



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The UK's only pain-relieving gel with two pain-killing ingredients plus anti-inflammatory action.



*As voted by independent pharmacists in The Pharmacy Product of the Year Awards.

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ASK SARAH

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Dr Sarah Jarvis answers your health questions this month

◆ Back pain ◆ Skin rashes ◆ Prescription-only medicines from your pharmacist

Is there a cure for my back pain?

Q I have horrible shooting pains from my lower back right down to my toes, which get worse when I bend over. I'm 42 and I've had this before, but never this bad. What can I do?

A Lower back pain is all too common – four in five people get it at some point. Your symptoms sound like sciatica – pain from pressure or irritation of the sciatic nerve, running from the base of your spine down the back of your legs to your toes. The nerve is formed from five nerves emerging from the lower spine through openings between the vertebrae. Most sciatica is caused by pressure on these upper nerves from a prolapsed disc between the vertebrae. The discs act as shock absorbers and, if out of place, can press on nearby nerves and send pain along their whole length. Since the sciatic nerve is the longest nerve in the body, that's a long way.

Sciatica often settles in about six weeks. Doctors used to recommend strict bed rest, but we now know this can do more harm than good. It's important to keep as active as you can, building up activities as the pain allows. Stretching exercises or physiotherapy relieve pain and build muscle strength – your GP can advise. Painkillers, such

as anti-inflammatory drugs like ibuprofen or naproxen (as a tablet or gel/cream) may help in the short term. However, anti-inflammatories can damage the stomach lining and occasionally the kidneys, especially in older people and with long-term use. Talk to your doctor about side effects and keeping risks to a minimum. In more severe cases, amitriptyline (also used in depression), gabapentin (also used for epilepsy) or painkilling/steroid injections may help. Recent evidence suggests paracetamol may not be effective for sciatica.

Although rare, sciatica-like pain can be a red flag for serious pressure on the nerve roots. Always seek help immediately if you get sudden weakness in your leg or foot, problems with your bladder and/or bowel (usually being unable to pass water) or numbness in the area around your back passage. If you've had recent trauma, have a history of cancer, are feeling generally unwell, experiencing weight loss or if the pain doesn't settle, do see your doctor.



I've had an itchy rash and my doctor tells me it's ringworm – it sounds embarrassing, but he was relaxed. How did I get it?



Ringworm sounds revolting, but there's no worm involved – it's a fungal infection called tinea. A tinea infection of the foot is called athlete's foot, and in the groin it's called jock itch. It's easily caught from people or items (such as towels) touched by an infected person, as well as from pets. It causes a patch of red, scaly, inflamed (often itchy) skin, which spreads outwards and is paler in the centre. The 'ring' part of the name comes from the fact that the rash is usually circular, with clear demarcation between infected skin and normal skin around it. Antifungal creams are usually effective, but need to be used for different lengths of time, in some cases up to 10 days after skin is back to normal – check with your GP or pharmacist. In severe cases, antifungal tablets may be prescribed. To minimise the chance of it returning, get your pet (if you have one) checked and treated for ringworm, avoid sharing towels and clean your bath or shower well.

OUR HEALTH PROMISE



No fluff, crackpot theories or bad medicine. Health articles in Good Housekeeping are double-checked for accuracy by a leading expert from the GH Health Watch team.

Want to ask Sarah a question?

Email ghask.sarah@hearst.co.uk or write to Ask Sarah, Good Housekeeping, 72 Broadwick Street, London W1F 9EP. We regret we are unable to respond to letters individually.

SARAH'S ADVICE... on buying medicines

Remember when virtually all medicine had to come from your doctor? Today, more than 150 formerly prescription-only medicines (POMs) are now available to buy from your pharmacist. Here are some I often recommend:

1 **Ibuprofen is effective** for all sorts of pain and you can get the same strength (400mg) from your pharmacist as your GP would prescribe, though supermarkets can only sell the 200mg strength. Many topical anti-inflammatory gels and creams are also available.

2 **Aciclovir (Zovirax) topical antiviral cream** is essential if you suffer from cold sores – for best results, start treatment as soon as you feel that familiar tingling on your lip.

3 **Proton pump inhibitors** (esomeprazole, omeprazole or pantoprazole) offer longer-term relief than antacids for mild heartburn.

4 **Topical vaginal thrush treatments** are often effective, but you can also get a single oral capsule (Fluconazole).

5 **For migraine sufferers**, triptan tablets revolutionised lives. Now sumatriptan (Imigran) is also available if you've been diagnosed. □



KEEP ON MOVING

Help put a stop to joint pain all day long with one easy gel application – and take a big leap at life

There's nothing like the fantastic feeling you get after pushing yourself a bit further at the gym or going the extra mile on a

country walk, but if aches in your joints are making you think twice about your favourite activities, it could be time to give them a little extra attention. Voltarol 12 Hour Emulgel offers all-day concentrated relief from joint pain without tablets. All you have to do is apply the gel to the area that gives you trouble and then you can forget about it.

Voltarol gets to work on pain and inflammation deep in the joints, where it matters most, helping to give you the freedom to get on with your plans – welcome news for all those of us actively rethinking our grandmothers' approach to ageing! After all, in a survey* of women aged 55 plus, more than a third have started a new activity in the past 10 years. So there's no reason to call time on your busy schedule.

Voltarol gets to work on pain and inflammation deep in the joints, where you need it most

ALL-DAY RELIEF FROM JOINT PAIN AND INFLAMMATION

Voltarol 12 Hour Emulgel P 2.32% Gel is available without prescription at pharmacies nationwide. It contains diclofenac diethylammonium. Always read the label.



*VOLTAROL SENIOR MOMENT RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY ONE POLL, AUGUST 2015

Indulge and stay youthful

Switch off your alarm clock and reap the health benefits!



The latest health advice shows that ageing well doesn't have to be all sweat 'n' tears. Many of the things we enjoy are actually good for us, so try these treats to brighten up the New Year:

- **Have a lie-in.** Snuggling under the duvet for eight hours can boost resistance to stress, colds, heart disease and diabetes. Sleeping too little is risky, yet by age 55,

one in three of us scrapes by on less than six hours a night, increasing our exposure to harmful gene changes.

- **Love your smartphone.**

Learning to use a mobile or tablet could explain why we're staying smarter for longer. Recent studies show that today's 50-year-olds achieve the level of thinking skills once expected of those five years younger.

- **Meet up with friends.**

Strengthening our social

network (in real life, not on Facebook) is the best thing we can do for our health apart from giving up smoking, says psychologist Professor Robin Dunbar.

- **Sign up for a life drawing class!**

Being creative can do more to stimulate the brain than Sudoku. Researchers at Newcastle University found an art class beat puzzles and exercise to produce the greatest improvement in brain power.



I get a stabbing pain in my toe every time I wear my favourite heels. How can I make it go away?

More midlife women are finding that wearing narrow, high-heeled shoes comes with a sting in the toe. Cases of women over 40 with Morton's Neuroma – nerve damage, usually near the fourth toe – have doubled in 10 years. Dancers, runners and athletes whose forefeet take a pounding are also at risk, and certain foot shapes are more susceptible, too. As women with Morton's outnumber men four to one, however, high heels are probably more

likely to blame than high arches.

It's wise to see your GP first to rule out other problems, such as poor circulation and diabetes. Wearing wider shoes (sorry!), toe foam, and insoles that cushion the ball of the foot often help. If you're still hobbling, ask about steroid injections or, as a last resort, surgery to remove the nerve. The op's success rate can be as high as 95%, Dr Andy Craig told the Royal College of Surgeons.

HOW SHE DOES IT!



Screen star CHARLOTTE RAMPLING, 69, gets real about ageing: *'This is the face I've earned. This is the face that is me now. I'm just going to watch my face grow older – that's got to be damn interesting. There's always a frightening point when your face starts to change, but if you go through that (and it lasts maybe 10 years) then you find that you've grown into it.'*

Hold the cocktails and try a mocktail instead



Get the juicer out for dry January

Successful over 50s are at high risk of problem drinking, according to new research. If a glass of wine with dinner has become 'let's finish the bottle', break the habit with these delicious, anti-ageing mocktails.

- **Blueberry spritzer**

Blueberries have been found to lower blood pressure in post-menopausal women, so add a spoonful of the juice to sparkling water.

- **Beet and coconut cooler**

Blend energising beet juice (it helps the muscles work harder) with fresh orange and lime, and then top up with coconut water.

- **Green tea and mint julep**

If you're trying to control cholesterol, green tea could help. Brew up green teabags, fresh mint and peeled ginger, leave for 15min, then strain and chill. ◻



Blitz some beets for an energy boost

My Vanilla Yogurt

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EAT BETTER

Registered nutritionist Anita Bean uncovers what's healthy and what's hype

TRICK YOUR BODY INTO LOSING WEIGHT

Try these easy, research-based steps to improve your diet

◆ **Munch an apple** on the way to the supermarket. Researchers found those shoppers who ate an apple before shopping bought 28% more fruit and veg than others who ate a biscuit.

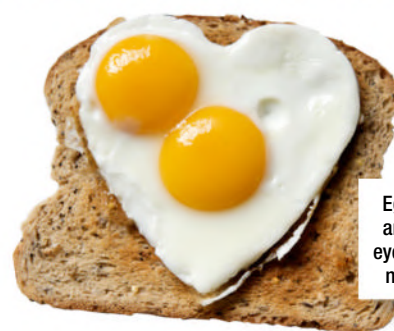
◆ **Place a (pretty) fruit bowl** next to your car keys – making healthy foods visible, attractive and easy to reach means you're more likely to grab a banana than a chocolate biscuit, according to an analysis of 112 studies.

◆ **Eat with your eyes.** In one study, people were more likely to choose a salad that was presented artistically than one containing identical ingredients in a typical piled-up fashion.

◆ **Don't surf the web.** People who played a computer game while eating lunch felt less full, snacked more and had more trouble recalling

what they'd eaten than those who ate without distractions.

◆ **Spend 20-30 minutes in the morning sun.** A study found that people who enjoyed moderately bright sunshine in the morning weighed less than those who got most of their exposure later in the day. You don't have to be outdoors – a room brightened by natural sun will do.



Egg yolks are full of eye-friendly nutrients

SIGHT BOOSTERS

It's not just carrots... Foods rich in the carotenoids lutein and zeaxanthin may reduce the risk of chronic eye diseases like age-related macular degeneration and cataracts, according to research. These are the leading causes of blindness in people over 55 and are thought to be due to oxidation and inflammation of the eyes. The best sources of carotenoids are butternut squash, carrots, pumpkin, broccoli, sweetcorn, spinach and kale – and egg yolks are an even richer source. Other studies have found that a diet rich in vitamins C and E, zinc, and omega-3 fatty acids can prevent age-related eye diseases: omega-3 fatty acids are found in oily fish and walnuts, and good sources of zinc include nuts and shellfish. Vitamins A, C, and E are found in many vegetables, fruits, nuts and seeds. □

Diet away dementia

Consuming plenty of green leafy vegetables, beans, berries, wholegrains – and a little wine! – can help keep your brain younger, say researchers. Cognitive decline is a natural part of ageing, but a new study has found that people who followed the MIND diet (which stands for:



Mediterranean-Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay) had brains 7½ years younger after five years than those who didn't. An earlier study showed that the MIND diet may cut the risk of Alzheimer's disease by 52%. The diet involves eating 'brain healthy' foods and recommends at least three portions of wholegrains, a green leafy vegetable, another vegetable and a glass of wine each day. Beans, berries and poultry should be eaten at least twice a week and fish once a week. Unhealthy options like sweets, pastries and fast food should be

limited to once a week. So what are the top 10 healthy brain foods? Green leafy vegetables (such as spinach and kale); other veg (such as red peppers, squash, carrots and broccoli); nuts; berries (including blueberries and strawberries); beans and lentils; wholegrains; fish; poultry; olive oil and wine (in moderation).

SMALL CHANGES, BIG DIFFERENCE

Boost your willpower! Here's how far you would have to walk to burn off the calories in your favourite breakfast:

◆ Full English (2 fried eggs, 1 sausage, 2 bacon rashers, 1 toast)	632 cals		7.9 miles
◆ OatSoSimple instant porridge with 180ml skimmed milk	180 cals		2.3 miles
◆ 1 Starbucks croissant	272 cals		3.4 miles
◆ Jordans Crunchy Oat Granola (45g with 125ml semi-skimmed milk)	231 cals		2.9 miles
◆ Alpen Original (45g with 125 ml semi-skimmed milk)	213 cals		2.7 miles
◆ Bagel with Philadelphia Light	266 cals		3.3 miles

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY

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SENSITIVE SKIN EXPERTS

News ❖ Treats ❖ Trends

BEAUTY DISCOVERIES...

* **Elizabeth Arden Eight Hour Cream All-Over Miracle Oil**, £29, is a

spray-on oil version of the original multi-tasker with botanicals including anti-ageing tsuaki oil. Use it on your face, body and hair.



* A gentle cleansing option, **Dr Andrew Weil for Origins Mega-Mushroom Skin Relief Micellar Cleanser**,

£27.50, leaves skin feeling clean and comfortable and helps fight the effects of pollution.

* Keep your lips looking youthful with **Niod Lip Bio-Lipid Concentrate**, £38 (victoriahealth.com). It contains the latest in peptide and biotechnology to hydrate and visibly plump lips.



Can't find the right nail colour? Just commission your own!

*Colour match your nail polish to your outfit or whatever else takes your fancy with **PALETTE LONDON'S** bespoke service. Send a swatch or picture and in two weeks you'll get your colour, base coat and top coat. £75, palette.london.com.*

ON TRIAL Skin boosters

Every month our panel road-tests the latest products. These got top marks:

Estée Lauder Resilience Lift, £69 'Wonderfully nourishing for my very dry skin, this made it look firmer, too.'



Garnier Miracle Wake Up Cream, £12.99 'This is great for blurring lines and making you look less tired.'



Le Couvent des Minimes Loving Care for the Face, £14 'Non-greasy and soothing for my slightly sensitive skin.'



BUYS OF THE MONTH

One for **Thierry Mugler Angel** fragrance fans: limited edition **Angel Passion** [1], £65, is the same scent in a new red bottle. Freshen up your hair with non-aerosol powder-mist **Aveda Shampure Dry Shampoo** [2], £22 (refills £18). For precise make-up application and blending, try **Bare Minerals Swept Away** [3], £30, a five-piece mini brush set. Glamourise eyes, lips and cheeks with **YSL Kiss & Love Multi Usage Palette** [4], £59. Sparkly, pink and perfect for parties: it's **Viktor & Rolf Limited Edition Bonbon** [5], £74. A new take on heated rollers, **Babyliss Curl Pods** [6], £60, need no pins – just wind hair, snap to close and leave to cool.



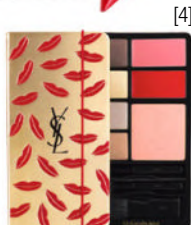
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Crowning glory: complete your party look with a little help from the experts

MAXIMUM GLAMOUR

*PREP YOUR LIPS

Dry, cracked lips won't hold colour, so gently exfoliate and moisturise with **Clinique Sweet Pot Sugar + Scrub**, £15 (from 4 December, Debenhams), before you apply lipstick.

***NOW TRY THIS** Update your classic red lipstick for the equally glamorous on-trend berry. 'Universally flattering, berry shades work with all skin tones and look super modern and fresh when worn with neutral, minimal eye make-up,' says Poppy King, founder of Lipstick Queen. Try **Revlon Colourburst Matte Balm in Fiery** [1], £7.99, and **Dior Addict Lipstick in Gotha** [2], £26.50.



[1]

[2]

SPEEDY HAIR SOLUTIONS

Stylists at Show Dry's Styling Bars will customise the blow-dry, braiding or up-do looks from their EXPRESS SERVICE MENU to suit your hair type, from £20 for 20 minutes, at selected department stores (showdry.com). Or visit the BRAID BAR, from £10 at 200 SUPERDRUG stores nationwide, for a quick, catwalk-inspired look.

GROWN-UP GLITTER



'Sparkly, spangly nails instantly say party glamour,' says manicurist Sabrina Gayle. 'For a modern twist, paint your nails in your favourite colour, and then use a glittery top coat on your ring fingers.' We love **Chanel Le Top Coat Lamé Rouge Noir**, £18, **Nails Inc Alexa Chung Snowglobe**, £14, and **OPI Nail Polish in Super Star Status**, £12.50.

FAST body fix

Baring your arms or legs in your party dress? Get an airbrushed finish with **Sanctuary Spa Wonder Body**, £8. Tinted pigments add subtle warmth, while blurring light reflectors hide blemishes. It lasts until you wash it off and is smudge proof, so it won't ruin your dress either.



Get a party-ready glow



THE 30-SECOND MUST-DO

Curling your lashes acts like a push-up bra for your eyes. It opens them up, giving a more youthful look. On super-straight lashes, set the curl with waterproof mascara. The formula dries quickly, locking the curl into shape. 'Whatever your colouring, use black mascara,' says Bobbi Brown Pro Make-Up Artist Amy Conway. 'The contrast adds definition and emphasises your eye colour.' □

FEATURE: EVE CAMERON, GILLIAN DAVIES
PHOTOGRAPHY (POSED BY MODELS): TRUNK ARCHIVE,
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Relax RECHARGE, *revitalise...*

There's far more to a spa visit than pampering (not that we're averse to that, of course!). New treatments and therapies can help sort out health niggles, boost mental wellbeing and kick-start lifestyle changes. We sent out spies in fluffy bath robes to investigate which treatments do make a difference. And if you can't get away, try our easy at-home tips

FEATURE **SALLY BROWN**

The libido tune-up

Call it the 50 Shades effect... savvy spas are putting sexual wellbeing on the menu.

WHERE TO GO

The aim of a Shh (sensual, healing, harmony) retreat is to 'get your glow' and re-ignite your sex drive through group workshops, acupuncture, breathing and emotional freedom techniques. Super-private and women-only, it's held at a collection of luxurious venues, including a country manor with spa facilities in Dorset. The food is fantastic, there are daily massages and aromatherapy baths. From £1,500, sensualhealingharmony.com.

ALSO WORTH A VISIT

At the luxury wellness resort Canyon Ranch in Tucson, Arizona, you can

opt for a private sexual therapy consultation with a full sexual health check. In February, sexologist Dr Tierney Lorenz from the famous Kinsey Institute is hosting workshops on the personal need for pleasure. From £3,062, canyonranch.com.

TAKE-HOME TIP

Talk yourself up, says Shh retreat co-founder Vikki van Someren – positive affirmations can help. 'When you're rubbing in body lotion after your bath, repeat to yourself: I love my skin, I love my body, I am enough.' The idea is to reprogramme your subconscious mind, so you feel sexy from the inside out.

Reawaken your sensual self with spa breaks that put the accent on sexual wellbeing



Look better, fast!

To fit in with our ever-busier schedules, express spas are popping up in urban locations.

WHERE TO GO

At the Speed Spa at the new House of Elemis day spa off Regent's Street in London, you can usually get an appointment the same day. Try Firm Favourites, a 30-minute facial with micro-current to stimulate collagen, and lift and brighten. From £40, elemis.com.

ALSO WORTH A VISIT

The new Spa at the Midland in Manchester has sleep pods for a sneaky lunchtime nap, and express treatments from £10 (qhotels.co.uk). At John Lewis in Oxford Street, London, the new Clarins Beauty Bar offers 30-minute treatments for just £25, including the SOS Facial, or pop into the brand new &Beauty day spa at John Lewis in Grand Central, Birmingham.

TAKE-HOME TIP

Brighten dull skin with a facial at home, says Noella Gabriel from Elemis: 'Soak a flannel in hand-hot water, lie down and place it over your face for a minute. Remove, then massage skin with a facial oil, using the fingertips to stroke upward and outward. Rinse the flannel in warm water again and sweep over skin to remove any excess oil. Apply moisturiser to finish.'



For some serious nurturing

The newest spas are not complete without a traditional Middle-Eastern hammam. We all need cosseting now and then, and there's no better way than having someone scrub, soap, rinse you from top to toe, wash your hair, then give you a massage, before wrapping you up in warm towels.

WHERE TO GO

The hammam at the Scarlet is just one of the many appealing features of this ultra-chic eco-hotel near Newquay in Cornwall. Your hammam journey lasts 45 minutes and includes a top-to-toe scrub rinsed off with warm water, a mud wrap, and foot and head massages. Finish with a snooze in a canvas pod, hanging from the ceiling of the relaxation room or sip a glass of Champagne in the clifftop hot tub. From £195, scarlethotel.co.uk.

ALSO WORTH A VISIT

You'll find the best hammam in London at Urban Retreat, Harrods. From £125, urbanretreat.co.uk.

TAKE-HOME TIP

For baby-soft skin, create a hammam-style scrub: mix a handful of sea salt with olive oil, says Steph Crosby, spa development manager at the Scarlet. 'Use circular motions, working from the top down. Do it just before getting out of your shower - it leaves a moisturising film of oil.'



For head-to-toe buffing,
head for a hammam



Bathing in mineral-rich
springs is back in fashion



Taking the waters

Naturally occurring, mineral-rich thermal springs have been renowned for their healing powers for centuries. Now, an authentic 'taking the waters' experience is back in fashion.

WHERE TO GO

Tamina Therme in Switzerland is an ultra-chic bath house with indoor and outdoor thermal pools filled from the nearby Tamina spring. It wouldn't be out of place in a five-star resort (immaculate décor, floor to ceiling windows and an attendant who drapes a warm fluffy towel around your shoulders when you get out) but it's actually the town's public bathhouse, and costs just 28 Swiss francs (around £18) to while away a day in the various hot tubs, whirlpools, swimming pools, saunas and relaxation areas. It was built for the town by the owners of the Grand Resort Bad Ragaz, a sprawling wellness resort that also houses its own thermal water spa, 36.5° Wellbeing and Thermal (named after the temperature of the water when it comes out of the ground). The spa specialises in treatments such as Haki, a cross between a massage and yoga that takes place in a thermal bath. From £163 a night, resortragaz.ch.

ALSO WORTH A VISIT

The Gainsborough Bath Spa in Bath is the only hotel in the UK with its own naturally occurring mineral spa. From £285, thegainsboroughbathspa.co.uk. Harrogate's Turkish Baths & Health Spa is a genuine thermal spa with Victorian terrazzo floors and a beautifully tiled plunge pool that's run by the local council. From £13.50, harrogate.gov.uk.

TAKE-HOME TIP

Ease muscles and water retention with a magnesium-rich Epsom salt bath. Just add a cupful to running water. Try Boots Epsom Salts, £1.69 for 200g.



Outdoor spas give mental wellbeing a boost

On-trend ecotherapy

It started with outdoor hot tubs appearing at festivals like Camp Bestival and the Isle of Wight Festival. Then spas cottoned on that there's something extra energising about the outdoor spa experience. 'The contrast of going from hot to cold gives you an adrenalin boost and a sense of wellbeing,' says the Scarlet's Steph Crosby. And we now know that the more time we spend outdoors in green spaces, the better our mental wellbeing, and our vitamin D levels.

WHERE TO GO

Guests love the outdoor Spa Garden at Rockcliffe Hall near Darlington, even in the depths of a north-eastern winter. You get a hit of bracing air and the bliss of warm, bubbling water in the infinity-edge thalassotherapy pool, which looks out on to uninterrupted parkland. Once you're in, you may never want to leave, but there's heated decking to make it easier, and you can always retreat to the large glass-fronted sauna or wrap up and relax in front of the fire pit. From £170, rockcliffehall.com.

ALSO WORTH A VISIT

A brand new outdoor spa opens

officially in February at the Bedruthan hotel on the North Cornwall coast. After a sauna, stand under the cold bucket shower, then wrap up and revel in the top-to-toe tingles as you sip a pot of herbal tea in front of the outdoor log fire. From £65, bedruthan.com.

TAKE-HOME TIP

Go for a walk in the woods. Known as Shinrin-Yoku (or forest bathing) in Japan, it's thought that the essential oils in trees emit phytoncides which, when breathed in, reduce levels of the stress hormone cortisol in the body and as a bonus, help to regulate the immune system.



Your 360° check-up

If you yearn to say, 'just check everything' to your GP, medi-spas are for you. They combine relaxation and pampering with cutting-edge medical treatments, offering a top-to-toe body overhaul from an integrated team that includes doctors, nutritionists and osteopaths. Perfect if you've got a stubborn health condition, you're allergic to doctors' waiting rooms, or you're recovering after illness.

WHERE TO GO

You'll be given a tailor-made health regeneration plan – from the friendliest doctors in white coats – at The SHA Wellness Clinic, near Alicante in Spain. It's a mix of holistic and high science, such as macrobiotic food and cryotherapy – three minutes in a chamber full of freezing nitrogen to kick-start the body's repair system. You're also encouraged to sunbathe naked on your balcony – for all that vitamin D. From £2,695, shawellnessclinic.com.

ALSO WORTH A VISIT

If you're recovering from cancer, consider a visit to Ragdale Hall in Leicestershire for treatments designed by aromatherapist Jennifer Young of beautydespitecancer.com, which are aimed at soothing post-cancer skin. From £62; ragdalehall.co.uk.

TAKE-HOME TIP

Alejandro Bataller from SHA Wellness is a big believer in the 80/20 rule – eat well and live healthfully 80% of the week, Monday to Friday, for example, and then you can indulge at the weekend.



Reboot your nutrition and feel better from the inside out

Give your system an MOT

A gut reset turns the clock back for your digestion

WHERE TO GO

Dropping a pound or two is a bonus, but some spas offer the latest nutritional expertise to upgrade health from the inside out. A Nourish retreat can benefit chronic health problems like psoriasis, unbalanced hormones and feeling tired-all-the-time, says nutritionist Amanda Hamilton. She hosts monthly retreats at the five-star Akra Barut spa near Antalya in Turkey to boost good bacteria and eliminate your personal damaging foods, allowing the gut to repair. From £1,695, nourishclinics.com.

ALSO WORTH A VISIT

You can retrain your taste buds and 'de-sugar' your brain in seven days at Grayshott Spa, near Haslemere in Surrey, where clinical nutritionist Stephanie Moore's programme of digestive cleansing can also help combat weight gain, IBS and pre-

diabetes. From £1,495, grayshottspa.com. Abroad, head for Buchinger Wilhelmi, for a 10-day fasting retreat famous for treating IBS, as well as arthritis and other inflammatory conditions. It's not for the fainthearted (many days are liquids-only) but there's plenty of pampering to take your mind off food. From £631, buchinger-wilhelmi.com.

TAKE-HOME TIP

Skip breakfast. 'It's a myth that skipping breakfast is bad for you,' says Hamilton. 'The human body is designed to have periods without food.' Fasting can help reduce inflammation as well as shift excess pounds. One of the easiest ways is to limit eating to an eight-hour window. Eat your first meal at noon (have tea or coffee with a splash of milk to keep you going), then eat normally, but make sure you have your last meal by 8pm at night. For best results, do it three times a week. ■

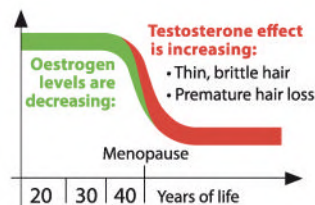
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Did you know the menopause can cause hair loss?

NO.1
FEMALE
SHAMPOO*



Every third woman experiences hair loss or thinning hair. This is due to the fact that as a woman approaches the menopause, oestrogen levels decline and the negative impact of testosterone rises. This hormonal fluctuation can lead to hair thinning or hair loss. For those women that are affected, the hair loss can be dramatic.



Plantur 39 shampoo is formulated with a Phyto-Caffeine ingredient that penetrates all the way into the hair follicle.

If used regularly it may help reduce the effect of these hormones on the hair roots. Which could help reduce hair thinning or hair loss during and after the menopause.

Plantur 39 is available at Boots, pharmacies and leading supermarkets.

*Source: Nielsen Company Panel, 2014, Germany, per SKU in German drug stores

INSIDER SKINCARE

Beautifully glowing skin without the price tag? Those in the know go to Superdrug, where B. is the new beauty buzz



THE PERFECT SKINCARE FOR YOU

Exclusive to Superdrug, B. skincare products contain high concentrations of well-known ingredients that are clinically proven to work. 'I'm at that stage when it's all about anti-ageing formulas,' says Carrie. 'B. skincare categorises skin concerns according to your life phase, so it's easy to find the right products. It's good to have that direction.'

Beauty specialist Carrie Jones, 31, whose camera-ready touch gives models and celebrities their red carpet glow, knows more than most that a regular skincare regime is the key to radiant good looks. 'I encourage my clients to

give themselves a five-minute daily facial massage to bring blood to the surface and drain toxins from dull, tired skin,' she says. 'In the morning, it's a great wake-up treatment that firms and gets rid of puffiness, especially around the eyes. Last thing at night, it relaxes skin, smooths lines and helps night cream to sink in properly,' she adds.

When it comes to products, Carrie needs them to sink in easily, leaving skin looking instantly refreshed. 'My skin is dry, so I like creams to feel rich, but not heavy,' Carrie says. 'A dewy glow makes your skin look so much younger and healthier, but you don't need to spend a fortune.' Non-perfumed, vegan and cruelty-free, B. skincare uses quality ingredients without the high price tag. 'I definitely feel the difference in my skin,' she says.

'A dewy glow makes skin look so much healthier and younger. But you don't have to spend a fortune'

RESILIENT & RADIANT

B. Radiant Antioxidant Boost Facial Oil, £13.99, calms environmentally stressed skin with a burst of moisture infused with antioxidant vitamins C and E. Rosehip, Argan and Crambe seed oil, instantly soften, smooth and help strengthen the skin's barrier. 'I love patting this on before bed and before giving myself a massage,' says Carrie.



SOOTHED & SOFTENED

B. Refreshed Essence Lotion, £6.99, instantly soothes and softens with allantoin and algae extract, while hyaluronic acid hydrates, plumps and smooths. 'After cleansing and before moisturising, splash a little into the palms of your hands and pat into your skin,' Carrie advises. 'It's an instant moisture boost.'



RESTED & REFRESHED

B. Radiant Overnight Mask, £11.99, super-charges your skin with velvety moisture while you sleep.

Niacinamide and panthenol transform dull, dry skin, so you wake to a more supple, smoother-looking complexion. 'Use this over your regular night cream when your skin needs a boost,' Carrie suggests.

'B. skincare targets your life stage, so it's easy to find the right product. I really feel the difference in my skin'



CALM & CLEAR

B. Prepared Anti-blemish Makeup Primer, £9.99, contains blemish-fighting salicylic acid and soothing aloe vera to calm and smooth skin. 'Primers are essential to smooth pores and wrinkles and help keep make-up fresh,' says Carrie. 'This has a shine-beating matt finish that helps keep oily skin in check.'

PREMIUM SKINCARE, PERFECTLY SUITED TO YOU Want to find your perfect skincare regime, or new make-up products chosen just for you? Now you can, with the B. skincare and make-up range, all exclusive to Superdrug. Visit bisforbeautiful.com to get your bespoke beauty plan now.



Exclusively at **Superdrug**



Get the PARTY started

JAZZ IT UP

Team an easy tee with a standout maxi skirt for an up-to-date party look.

Top, £50, 8-16, Tommy Hilfiger (tommy.com). Skirt, £500, 8-16, CH Carolina Herrera (carolinaherrera.com). Heels, £225, 3-9, and clutch, £275, both LK Bennett. Earrings, £25, Meme London (meme.london)
RHYS WEARS: Suit, Joshua Kane Bespoke (joshuakanebespoke.com). Shirt, handkerchief, tie and socks, all Thomas Pink. Shoes, Russell & Bromley

A fresh take on dressing up, trends you'll want to try, figure-flattering festive frocks, and more (like A LOT of accessories) – our partywear edit is your essential guide to celebrating in style

Nini, Angela & Jo x

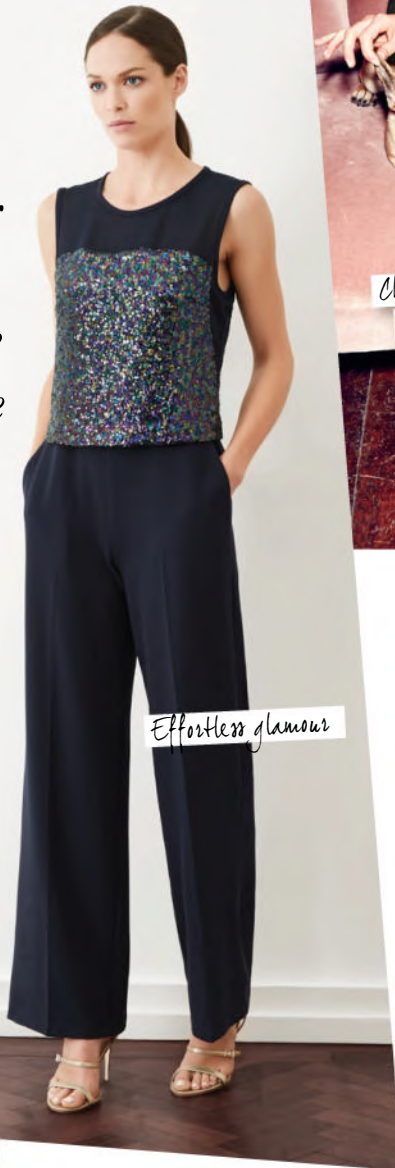
GH FASHION TEAM

PHOTOGRAPHY
TONY MCGEE
FASHION EDITOR
NINI KHATIBLOU

TRY A JUMPSUIT

These one-piece wonders make party dressing a cinch. With no separates to co-ordinate, you can just pop on a pair of heels and go. Stick to classic colours and look for draped or tailored cuts that skim the body.

Jumpsuit, £169, 8-18, Fenn Wright Manson (fennwrightmanson.com).



JEWELLED JUMPERS

Printed, patterned, embellished or sparkly knitwear is a simple way to glam up an outfit. It looks great with jeans and heels, under a simple tux or tucked into an A-line skirt for ladylike glamour.



Jumpsuit, £159, 8-18, and courts, £99, 3-7, both Boden (boden.co.uk)



Sequined jumper, £110, 8-16, The White Company (thewhitecompany.com)

Sequined spot jumper, £55, 8-18, White Stuff (whitestuff.com)



Jewelled sweater, £195, 8-16, LK Bennett

Invest in a sparkly knit

Figure-flattering DRESSES



Twist detailing disguises a wobbly tum.

Maxi dress, £199, 8-18, Jenny Packham at Debenhams



PETITE

Small prints and simple shapes work best for you.

Velvet dress, £119, 6-18, Precis Petite (precis.co.uk)

BIGGER BUST

Choose V-neck styles to flatter your shape.

Beaded dress, £250, 8-18, Biba Gold at House of Fraser



BOYISH

This illusion dress will add curves to slender frames

Strapless dress, £180, 4-14, Reiss (reiss.com)



SMALLER BUST

You look great in a high neckline.

Dress, £45, 8-20, Limited Edition at M&S, Marks & Spencer



CURVY

A shift dress skims and trims.

Prima Ombre Sequin Dress, £109, 14-26, Elvi (elvi.co.uk)



TALL

Take full advantage of your height to carry off this fringed dress.

Ombre flapper dress, £110, 10-22, Long Tall Sally (longtallsally.com)



PEAR SHAPED

Fit and flare styles suit your proportions.

Print dress, £375, 8-16, LK Bennett





IN THE SWING

This season is all about layering a roll-neck under tops and dresses. For a party option, go for a shimmery fabric and wear under a glam shift dress.

Dress, £195, 6-18, Coast (coast-stores.com). Jumper, £165, 8-16, Velvet by Graham & Spencer (trilogystores.co.uk). Shoes, £149, 3-9, Hobbs. Earrings, £29.99, Zara. Tights, £10, S-L, Moulin Rouge at My Tights (mytights.com) RHYS WEARS: Trousers, Joshua Kane Bespoke. Shirt, braces, bow tie and socks, all Austin Reed. Shoes, Russell & Bromley



STRICTLY STYLISH

A tailored white shirt works for an endless number of occasions and looks modern with the sleeves rolled up. Wear with a statement glittery skirt for an evening do.

Shirt, £79, 8-18, Hobbs. Skirt, £470, 8-16, Milly (millyny.com). Shoes, £265, 3-9, CH Carolina Herrera (carolinaherrera.com)
RHYS WEARS: Trousers and waistcoat, both Joshua Kane Bespoke. Shirt, bow tie and socks, all Thomas Pink. Shoes, Russell & Bromley

The best COVER-UPS

Slip on one of these outfit transformers – they will keep you warm, too.



Sparkle cape, £99, one size,
Coast (coast-stores.co.uk)



Glitter shrug, £20, 8-22,
M&Co (mandco.com)



Sequined jacket, £65, 8-20,
Nine by Savannah Miller at Debenhams



Embellished shrug, £40, one size,
No.1 by Jenny Packham at Debenhams



Feathered cape, £99, one size,
Per Una Speciale at Marks & Spencer

STYLISH SKIRTS

Create drama with bold prints and embellishments. Team any of these skirts with a classic white shirt or crew neck jumper for effortless party chic.



MIDI

Metallic pencil skirt,
£155, 8-14, Max Mara
at House of Fraser



MINI

Embroidered mini, £49.99,
8-16, H&M (hm.com/gb)



MAXI

Printed maxi skirt,
£179, 6-18, Coast
(coast-stores.co.uk)

Team your mini with
patterned opaque tights for
an on-trend party look

The ultimate EVENING TROUSERS

Brocade trousers are a sophisticated way to add some glamour to your wardrobe. Style them with patent pumps or strappy sandals after dark.

Pewter metallic trousers, £99, 6-22, Boden (boden.co.uk)

Cropped metallic trousers, £280, 6-16, Etro at My-Theresa (mytheresa.com)

Bold print trousers, £38, 8-16, Oasis (oasis-stores.com)

PARTY FEET

Whether you prefer to step out in metallic flats, neat kitten heels or 1970s-style platforms, there's a trend to suit everyone's style this season.



POCKET PUMPS

Fold-up flats are a lifesaver when it comes to the party season – put them in your bag or even your coat pocket! Choose black, silver or gold to make sure they'll co-ordinate with your outfit.

Platform sandals, £185, 3-7, Russell & Bromley (russellandbromley.co.uk)

Silver pumps, £80, 3-8, French Sole (frenchsole.com)

Gold courts, £69, 3-7, Dune (dunelondon.com)

Audrey bow flats, £89, 3-8, Boden (boden.co.uk)

Metallic courts go with everything



ROCKIN' A LOOK

Inject some fun by mixing unexpected colours and textures – more is more!

Top, £155, 6-18, French Connection. Trousers, £295, 8-16, CH by Carolina Herrera (carolinaherrera.com). Heels, £95, 3-9, Ted Baker, (tedbaker.com). Earrings, £25, Meme London (meme.london)

RHYS WEARS: Trousers, Joshua Kane Bespoke. Shirt, braces and socks, all Thomas Pink. Shoes, Russell & Bromley. Glasses, £244, Ray-Ban at Sunglasses Shop (sunglasses-shop.co.uk)





SAX APPEAL

Shimmer and sparkle dress up any fabric, especially denim. Try this season's must-have distressed jeans – a sequined pair will keep the overall look glam and party-appropriate.

Jeans, £56, 24-32, Topshop.
Shirt, £175, 8-16, Custommade
(custommade.dk). Shoes, £250,
3-9, LK Bennett. Bag, £130, Tommy
Hilfiger (tommy.com). Earrings,
£75, Meme London (meme.london).
Ring, £15, Wallis

RHYS WEARS: Trousers, Joshua Kane
Bespoke. Shirt, bow tie and socks, all
Austin Reed. Shoes, Russell & Bromley

Showstopper JEWELLERY

Add impact to an outfit with a key piece of jewellery



Necklace, £35, Phase Eight
(phase-eight.com)

Brooch, £10,
Accessorize

Earrings, £100, Isabel Marant
at Iris (irisfashion.co.uk)

Earrings, £269,
Oscar de la Renta at
Cadenza (cadenza.co.uk)

Earrings, £12,
Oasis

Necklace, £29.50,
Marks & Spencer

Ring, £30, K by Kelly
Hoppen at QVC UK
(qvcuk.com)

Cuff, £79, Lola Rose
(lolarose.co.uk)

THE SILK SHIRT

Pussy bow blouses are a big trend for Winter and look so elegant with a pair of wide leg trousers. This silk version by Winser London has a detachable tie and comes in five colours – beautiful and versatile!

Lauren silk blouse and bow, £195, 8-16,
Winser London (winserlondon.com)

BAGS OF STYLE

A new evening bag is guaranteed to make you feel more glamorous. Our favourites:



OPULENT
Embellished clutch, £45, Monsoon



PRINT AND TEXTURE
Snakeprint clutch, £45, Nica (nica.co.uk)



BOLD COLOUR
Red clutch, £165, Russell & Bromley (russellandbromley.co.uk)



METALLIC
Beaded clutch, £95, Reiss (reiss.com)



FEATHERS
Feathered bag, £69, Phase Eight (phase-eight.co.uk)

CLEVER BRAS

Backless, strapless, side fastening... Whatever you're wearing - we've got you covered!



ULTIMATE STRAPLESS BRA
£34, 30A-38G, Wonderbra at Figleaves (figleaves.com)

Winner

Multi-way bra, £25, 32B-40C, Marks & Spencer



Jasmine sidehook bra with interchangeable back panels, £35, 32A-38D, Ultimo (ultimo.co.uk)

Sexy SHAPEWEAR

These hold, mould and look fabulous. What's not to love?



FOR A NIPPED IN WAIST

Control bodysuit with plunge back, £95, 8-18, Simone Perele (simone-perele.com)



FOR ALL ROUND SUPPORT

Sheer body, £55, S-XL, Triumph (triumph.com)



FOR A SMOOTH SILHOUETTE

Control slip, £35, 8-22, Marks & Spencer

Winner



IN THE MIX

Wear a neon knit with a full, 1950s-style skirt and kitten heels for a curve-friendly outfit.

Jumper, £25, XS-L, Benetton (gb.benetton.com). Skirt, £199, 8-16, By Malene Birger at My-Theresa (mytheresa.com). Shoes, £210, 3-9, LK Bennett. Clutch, £95, Lulu Guinness (luluguinness.com). Earrings, £12, Dorothy Perkins

RHYS WEARS: Suit, Topman. Shirt, handkerchief, bow tie and socks, all Thomas Pink. Shoes, Russell & Bromley. Glasses, My-Optique



BOLD AS BRASS

A luxury leopard-print shirt dresses up the simplest outfit and looks great with gold sequins! Buy now for the party season and wear later with your favourite jeans and flats.

Shirt, £300, Equipment (harrods.com).

Skirt, £39, 8-18, JD Williams. Earrings, £15, Wallis

RHYS WEARS: Jacket, waistcoat and trousers, all Joshua Kane Bespoke. Shirt, Thomas Pink

WHAT *we'll* BE WEARING...

Whatever the occasion, I'll generally grab one of the several tux jackets I have in my wardrobe. And my theory is you can never have enough, so this season I'll be adding this fluid crepe style by American Vintage to wear with a sequined cami and a pair of black or grey jeans.

JO ATKINSON



Cashmere jumper, £210, S-XL, London W11 (londonw11.com)

'My go-to look is always a luxury cashmere jumper, leather trousers and super-glitzzy flats'



Leather trousers, £270, 8-16, Custommade (custommade.dk)



Flats, £155, 3-8, Lucy Choi (lucychoilondon.com)

FASHION EDITOR
Nini
LOVES

A dress code does nothing to get me into the party spirit. Who says glam has to be a dress and heels? I'd rather be the most understated person at a party. I try to shop at lesser-known brands and boutiques – as well as supporting up-and-coming designers, it means there's less chance of that dreaded 'OMG, she's wearing my outfit!' moment.

NINI KHATIBLOU



Sequin cami, £50, 8-16, Oasis

Jacket, £125, S-L, American Vintage at Iris (irisfashion.co.uk)

Shoes, £298, 3-7, J. Crew (jcrew.com)

'I'll be blowing the Christmas budget on these heels from J. Crew. As long as I don't have to walk very far, run for a taxi or dance, I'll be fine.'



'I love this slender gold brocade coat. It's slimming over black skinny pants and evening heels'

Patterned coat, £299, 8-18, Marc Cain (marc-cain.com)

FASHION EDITOR AT LARGE
Angela
LOVES

I'm not a dressy dresser, preferring to stay true to my daily uniform of black skinny pants (I dare not count how many pairs I own!). I'll add extra oomph with a dash of gold or sparkle, but everything starts with a good evening jacket or coat – I like to feel well covered.

ANGELA KENNEDY

Pyjama style: **Waterlily**

Comfort
*that sweeps you
off your feet*



Seriously Comfortable
cyberjammies

Each garment is crafted down to the smallest detail, with a unique and luxurious fabric blend. No one is more serious about comfort.

Available at cyberjammies.co.uk, John Lewis and HOUSE OF FRASER

SINCE 1849

Style AT ANY *age*



These are the looks, labels and trends to wear now, says Fashion Editor at Large **ANGELA KENNEDY**



Cashmere jumper, £395, 8-14, Eudon Choi at Brora (brora.co.uk)

Designs on cashmere

We love a fashion collaboration, and Eudon Choi, a favourite at London Fashion Week, has teamed up with cashmere wizards Brora to create a small but perfectly formed collection of hats, scarves, capes and sweaters. Relaxed and chic, with a sporty feel.

INDUSTRY INSIDER



'Faux fur always adds a sense of luxury and glamour,' says Kate Bostock, CEO of Coast. 'Our collection nods to the Seventies, with relaxed silhouettes that embody the spirit of the decade. I love this coat with lavish faux fur collar and cuffs – it can be worn for day or night.'



Coat, £225, 8-18, Coast (coast-stores.com)

TRY THE LATEST LACE-UPS

Swap your simple ballerina pump for the new pointy, criss-cross, lace-up flat. They're a great antidote to killer heels. You'll need to take your time over doing them up, though!

♦ Ella flats, £159, 3-8, Pretty Ballerinas (prettyballerinas.com)



IF YOU BUY ONE THING THIS MONTH MAKE IT...

shiny!

WorldMags.net

WE ♥ PARTY SEPARATES

Whether it's a skinny rib top with a chiffon skirt, or a sparkly sweater with jeans, dress-down party separates make it look as though you've made an effort, yet ensure you'll feel comfortable. This luxe metallic set has the makings of a take-you-anywhere party uniform and will integrate seamlessly into your existing wardrobe. Just add sparkly heels and you're good to go!

Jumper, £99, and trousers, £109, both 8-18, both Baukjen (baukjen.com)



LITTLE TREASURES

Former Topshop designer Chupi has created her own striking jewellery collection that celebrates nature –

twig and feather forms give the pieces an ageless, organic feel.

Look out, too, for Reiss's Premier jewellery collection, which complements its stylish party wear.



Swarovski crystal earrings, £65, Reiss (reiss.com)



Feather ring, £98, Chupi (chupi.com)



Twig ring, £111, Chupi (chupi.com)

From satin blouses with bow-tie necks to patent courts with Perspex heels, this is the season for shine and shimmer. Treat yourself to a glamorous little clutch or buy a fabulous jacket to pull your look together. □



Sequined bomber, £89, 8-24, M&S Collection at Marks & Spencer

Beautiful houses that twinkle with festive fabulousness don't happen by accident – their owners think long and hard about how they decorate for Christmas. We asked florist to the stars Paula Pryke OBE to reveal how she turns her Suffolk home into a magical grotto every December...



Fruits and flowers: colourful displays are a hallmark of Paula Pryke's holiday decorating

My upside-down CHRISTMAS TREE *and other secrets of Paula Pryke's festive home*



'We love to see visitors' reactions... It's always a talking point!'

Paula's striking artificial tree came from a Belgian company – find similar styles at White Stores (whitestores.co.uk) or eBay (ebay.co.uk)



‘Food and flowers are central to the Christmas spirit, whatever your budget allows!’



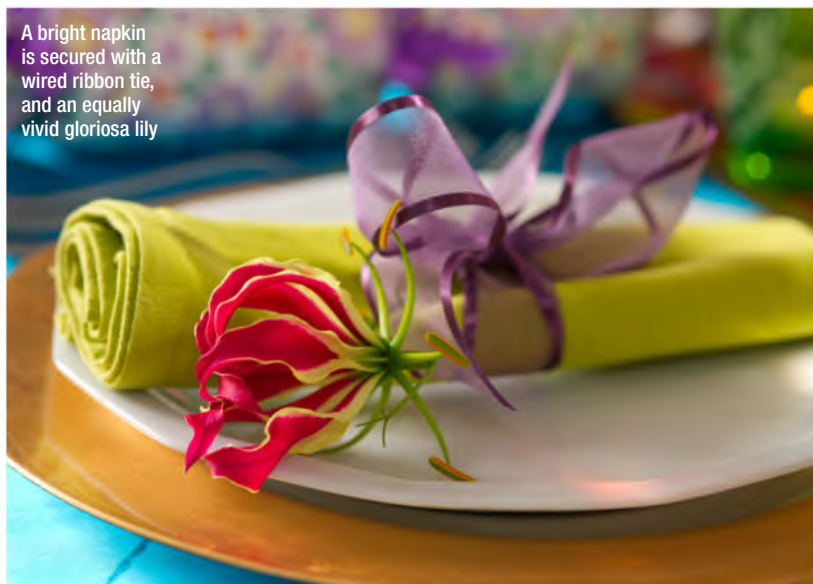
ARE YOU READY?

I start planning Christmas somewhere between Halloween and Thanksgiving at the end of November. It's a busy time of year for me with work and family, so I'm never as ahead as I should be! But I'm used to working to tight deadlines and can cope with stress. In fact, I'm a bit of an adrenalin junkie, so it usually gets done!

I adore colour – it is my motivating force for being a floral designer – so I like a bright Christmas, with lots of lights and candles and a little bit of sparkle. I choose a calmer theme if I'm entertaining on Boxing Day – this year, it is going to be pale pink, peach, lilac and gold.

If I had a mantra it would be not to do the same thing each year and to go with the flow. You want Christmas to be special for your guests, but you also want to have time to enjoy it all and, most importantly, to spend time with your family.

A bright napkin is secured with a wired ribbon tie, and an equally vivid gloriosa lily



Make your own festive wreath

Follow Paula's step-by-step guide to create this Christmas tradition

You will need A 30cm florist's foam ring ● 50cm decorative ribbon ● Around 20 10cm-long sprigs of Scots pine ● Seven sprigs each of Eucalyptus 'Baby Blue', hypericum berries, white waxflower, eryngium, Skimmia japonica 'Rubella' and Leucospermum cordifolium 'Succession' ● Lotus seedheads and pine cones



STEP 1

Soak the foam ring in water until air bubbles stop rising. Cut off the inside and outside edge with a craft knife to soften the wreath shape. Tie a length of ribbon around the ring to hang it. Add Scots pine sprigs to cover the ring.



STEP 2

Add sprigs (around 18cm long) of small-leaved Eucalyptus 'Baby Blue' at intervals around the ring. Do the same with the hypericum berries.



STEP 3

Cut sprigs of white waxflower to add to your ring.



STEP 4

Push in the skimmia and leucospermum flowerheads. Add a few stems of eryngium.



STEP 5

Wire a few lotus seedheads and pine cones by threading wire through the base and wrapping it around itself. Add to the ring.



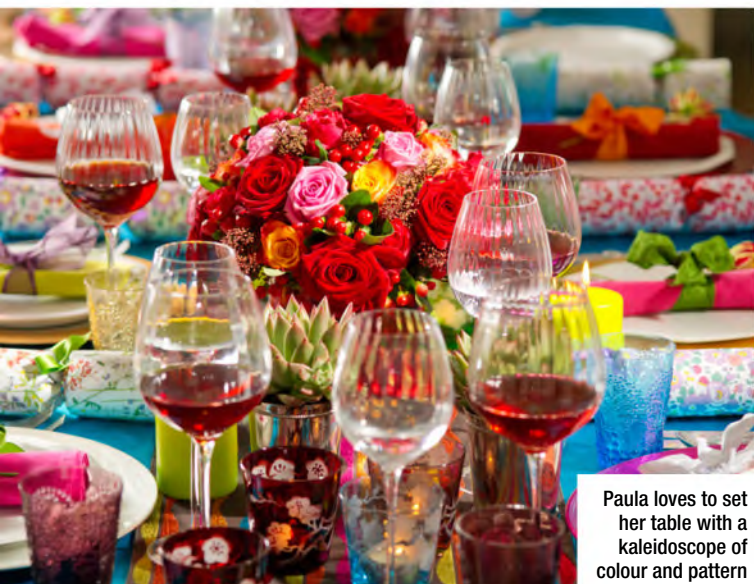
STEP 6

Hang your wreath, watering your foam every few days, keeping it damp at all times.

★ A kit to make the wreath shown here – including a florist's foam ring, foliage, flowers, seedheads and the ribbon and wires you need to complete it – is available now for £50 from paulapryke.com



Candles and strings of fairy lights add to the jewel-like glow of the flowers, plates and glasses on the dining table



Paula loves to set her table with a kaleidoscope of colour and pattern

GIFTWRAP (LEFT): NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY; THORNBACK & PEEL; KITH & KIN





Presents are piled up in the sitting room, where they vie for space with decorations and flowers



GIFTWRAP (MAIN PICTURE): NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY; THORNBACK AND PEEL, KITH & KIN, SOUTHBRANK CENTRESHOP; VASES, LSA INTERNATIONAL



Cut red Cyclamen 'Katherine' on the windowsill contrasts beautifully with cream candles and lasts up to three weeks

'It's a time for fantasy and tradition – and long walks with my two chocolate labradors'



Decorations include both vintage and more traditional styles

Green scheme: 'This year I'm matching some of my trees to the interior furnishings – this one picks up the lime green and turquoise in the sitting room,' says Paula



MAGICAL MEMORIES...

My mum is an excellent cook and has always shown her love for us through her baking and celebration food. My grandma was a trained cook, so food has always been central to any family times. We tend to hark back to traditional fare with a few modern twists. Mum still makes the Christmas pudding, sausage rolls and mince pies, and also stuffs my turkey!

I remember the Christmas season being so much shorter when I was younger. We'd decorate the tree all together on Christmas Eve and I can still recall the wonderful scent of pine.

BRANCHING OUT

This year I'm going to match or contrast my trees to my interior furnishings. One will be lime green and turquoise with lots of silver and white, and the other will be reds and shocking pink to make a statement in our dark-but-cosy library.

I mix it up: sometimes I do real trees, sometimes artificial. Faux trees are very effective now and the





What you smell.

What your
guests smell.



Have you gone noseblind?

Febreze truly eliminates odours and leaves a light Christmas scent.



Breathe Happy

WorldMags.net



Showy white hippeastrum (amaryllis) planted in a tall container make for a dramatic display



That's entertainment! Paula plans to treat Boxing Day guests to a party in peach and pink

[CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE] lights are often integral to the tree. Having picked out trees for numerous clients over the years and even decorated trees in Downing Street, I can tell you that a good-shape tree is very personal and the fake ones are on the whole what most people imagine.

The upside-down tree, which I originally bought for display, has become part of my Christmas tradition. I bought mine from a Belgian company, Goodwill. We love to see the reaction of visitors and it is always a talking point. You can hang any natural tree upside down if you have beams. We have hung a real tree before, but we like the effect of the faux one.

CHRISTMAS BOUQUETS

I always want scented flowers at Christmas, so I have freesias, paperwhites or hyacinths in the kitchen and bathrooms, and massive jasmine plants. There are always some Phalaenopsis orchids, too. Big vases are filled with amaryllis and holly, with Euphorbia fulgens in white or red. Table flowers vary each year, but

Roses in fuchsia and palest pink are combined with mauve, peach and gold accents for a candy-coloured bouquet



YOUR STRESS-FREE SEASON OF JOY

Florist Paula on how to stay as fresh as a daisy...

- ◆ Don't plan too much that you become overwhelmed! If life gets in the way, downsize. It's about friends and family and relaxing!
- ◆ I always start decorating in the middle of December and aim to finish the weekend before Christmas. If you haven't done it all by the 20th, pack up what's left and return it to the attic!
- ◆ I leave my flowers and greenery outside or in a cool place until the 23rd. Flowers like to be kept between 6° and 12°, so I often keep mine in an outside shed so that they last over Christmas.
- ◆ I often keep some flowers back for a change of look on Boxing Day or later in the week when I have different guests coming.
- ◆ Don't worry if something goes wrong. Last year I went to pick up my daughter on Christmas Eve and accidentally put my gammon in the top oven of the Aga rather than the bottom... Consequently, it fell to pieces! It was a shame, but it made a great turkey and ham truffle risotto!
- ◆ Most importantly, always have a cut-off point when you stop preparing and start enjoying! Remember that Christmas should be happy and joyful – and smiles are infectious!



An assortment of jewel-coloured vases from LSA and tealights sets off bright blooms



A wreath on the front door means the house says 'Welcome!'

[CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE] usually involve ranunculus or roses with skimmia, hypericum and ilex. Roses and tulips are great and long lasting, and carnations are having a big come back – there are some wonderful colours.

NOW WE'RE COOKING

On Christmas Eve we usually cook a gammon joint with Mary Berry's Mango Glaze and eat it with jacket potatoes and Mary's Mint and Mango Salsa. On Christmas Day I tend to go with Delia Smith – I've worked with her a lot and arranged flowers for her TV series. We have a free-range bronze Suffolk turkey from a farm we know, and Mum's stuffing is made from herbs and Suffolk sausage meat. I'll make an orange cheesecake and we have a good cheese board.

My career as a florist has always been linked to food. When Terence Conran started his restaurant Le Pont De La Tour, I did the opening flowers – and then at all the restaurants that followed. Much later, Mary Berry joined one of my flower classes and she still uses the design she learnt using amaryllis for her Christmas centrepieces! □

SHOP the look

Inspired by Paula's vibrant seasonal style? Go big on colour, even bigger on flowers...



Fleur De Lys glass, £4, Anthropologie (anthropologie.com)



Aurelia wine glasses, £47 for four, LSA International



Niloy cushion, £70, Bluebellgray (bluebellgray.com)



Henry dining bench (seats five), £530, John Lewis



Coffee table, from £331.55, Furnish (furnish.co.uk)

Telephone box glass decoration, £5, John Lewis



Lario napkins, £7.50 each, Designers Guild (designersguild.com)



Liberty Christmas crackers, £39.95 for six, Liberty (liberty.co.uk)



Marit table runner, £4, Ikea



Scented pillar candle, £2.50, Wilko (wilko.com)

FEATURE: CAROLYN BAILEY, PHOTOGRAPHY: TIM WINTER, SHOP THE LOOK COMPILED BY: GRACE ALLEN, VISIT PALLAPRYKE.COM (07736 6907 69), PAULA RUNS ONLINE COURSES ON MY-GARDEN-SCHOOL.COM

LUXURY STYLE

Bring hotel chic to your own bathroom with neutral tones and glamorous accessories



Tronico 250 shower head with rain-style water spray



Finezzo wall and floor tiles in Truffle



Sleek and ergonomic Coast basin tap in chrome

Creating a bathroom that feels like a luxurious and relaxing retreat is a lot easier than you might think. With a stunning range of products and expert advice, bathstore is there to help you every step of the way. To make a start, visit your nearest store to experience the products and watch your ideas come to life with bathstore's free 3D design service. Not sure which products will suit your plans? The experts at bathstore can advise you on everything from technical specifications to storage solutions. Once you're ready, bathstore's accredited service can install everything for you – with a five-year craftsmanship guarantee and a follow-up visit to ensure you're satisfied. So isn't it time your dream of the perfect bathroom came true? Visit bathstore and make it happen.



Above: Linen range in Grey, with Antique Gild mirrors. Left: Savoy halogen lamp chandelier, £299. Right: Linen range in Rust



For more information and to find your nearest store, visit bathstore.com. There are 173 stores nationwide, where you can see the products, speak to the experts about the 3D design service, and make your dream bathroom come true.

 **bathstore**
Bathrooms matter. Visit the experts.

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Out with the old, in with the **NEW**



*Grab a red marker,
draw a big circle
on the calendar
around the days
leading up to New
Year and prepare
for the biggest
declutter ever!
Good Housekeeping
shows you how,
with 40 great ideas...*

LEFT Storage unit, £2,199; **ON UNIT** (from left to right, top to bottom): marble cheese board, £55, pebble bowls, £6 each, cream vase, £25, slate placemats, £22 a pair, Elsa dinner plate, £8, glazed ceramic storage containers, from £16 each, woven baskets, £30 for a set of three, throw, £100, all Gray & Willow at House of Fraser. Other items, stylist's own

RIGHT Typography jar, £17.50, Skandium (skandium.com)
FAR RIGHT Melamine bowls, £37.99 for a set of four, Rice (rice.dk)



7 clearouts

FOR YOUR KITCHEN

- * Throw out any food past its expiry date.
- * Safely dispose of outdated medicines.
- * Get rid of unused gadgets. Some charity shops are delighted to have electrical items, but do check first.
- * Cut out favourite recipes and store in plastic pockets.
- * Banish plastic bags – reusable bags will save you money and space, and are much greener.
- * Stocktake your freezer – and discard anything that's been in there for more than three months.
- * Consolidate! Group lightbulbs, batteries and bin bags together so you know where to find them and when to buy more.



The professional touch...

'My motto is: keep it simple. I like to declutter in a practical and realistic way,' says Vicky Silverthorn, who organises the lives of busy people through youneeda vicky.com

LEFT Suffolk larder painted in charcoal, from £1,700, Neptune (neptune.com). Other items, stylist's own

Storage basket with pockets, £16, Cath Kidston (cathkidston.com)

Storage baskets, £25 for two, Cath Kidston (cathkidston.com)

7 JOBS FOR RIGHT NOW

- * Write down your goals: why do you want to get organised? What do you want to accomplish?
- * Decide where your clutter is going to go. Charity shop? Recycling? Tip?
- * Ask a friend to help – it's easier to be objective about someone else's things.
- * Don't run out to buy organising supplies – this is just another word for more clutter!
- * Take before pictures of each room and work out what needs to be cleared.
- * Switch to paperless post and opt to receive bank statements electronically.
- * Tell yourself, if you don't love, wear or use it, it's out!



6 life lessons

FOR YOUR LIVING AREA

- * Find new homes for books you have finished.
- * If you've joined the digital age, do you really need to keep all those CDs and videos?
- * Add extra storage: put up hooks on doors and on the backs of cupboards.
- * Hide away clearly marked storage boxes in cupboards.
- * Create clutter-free zones, such as the dining table, so some surfaces are always clear.
- * Don't be too hard on yourself – keep an attractive keepsake box for special mementos!

Vicky says:

- Keep ornaments to a minimum if you want them to be fully appreciated. A shelf with three lovely ornaments or photo frames is much nicer to look at than 50 of your favourites – not to mention easier to clean.
- Be systematic. Work from room to room, one at a time. Start, work, complete, stop. That's the key.
- Charity bag in hand, walk around each room of your home with your new eyes on. I bet you can easily fill a bag. Make it your mission to fill at least one bag during a sweep of your home.

Jesse R65 shelving, from £600 for a 33cm x 2m unit, Go Modern (gomodern.co.uk)

2 GHI TIPS FOR YOUR PAPERWORK

❖ Make Post-it notes a thing of the past by going digital. Whether it's a web link, a screen shot, a photo or simply a note to self, use Evernote to store it all in one place. Simply download the app for free from your app store on to your phone, tablet or computer and create an account.

❖ Leave files behind and access documents wherever you are with Google Docs – a free word processing app. As documents are stored in Google Drive – a free online

storage area – you can access them from any device that has the Google Docs app downloaded on to it. All you need is a Gmail account to get started.



Vicky says:

● Piles are the enemy... Piles of stuff, that is. Try not to let them get started but if they do develop, grit your teeth and sort them out – 10 minutes and it will be done!



Inside wall units, from £220 each, Calligaris (calligaris.co.uk)

Pom basket, £48, Anthropologie (anthropologie.com)

Bamboo basket, £82 for a set of two, MiaFleur (miafleur.com)

Pulp storage units, from £14.95, Muji (muji.co.uk)



FOR THE BEDROOM

- * Put out-of-season clothing into storage.
- * If it doesn't fit or you haven't worn it in a year, bin it or recycle!
- * Organise jewellery in a compartmentalised box or on a jewellery tree.
- * Invest in some attractive baskets for storage.
- * Divide and conquer with drawer compartments.
- * Think more classics and fewer throwaway clothes.

Vicky says:

- Don't sleep on clutter: keep the space under your bed as organised as possible.
- Underbed storage is great for stashing out-of-season clothes. I keep my holiday clothes away from my daily wardrobe in a separate drawer, ready to pack when needed.

THIS PICTURE

Pax wardrobe, from £149, Urshult cabinet lights, £21 each, Skubb storage cases (top), £7 each, Kompliment metal baskets, £22 each, all Ikea

INSET Porada Pit Stop shoe cupboard in walnut, £1,290, Go Modern (gomodern.co.uk)





4
ways...

TO KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK

- * Schedule a time each day for a routine tidy to your home to clear surfaces and floors.
- * Be wary of January sales – clutter often comes with a reduced price tag.
- * Keep a donation basket handy for unwanted items.
- * Use the weekend to get organised for the week ahead: clear out and stock the fridge, wash bedlinen, plan meals so you're not buying food daily. ☐

ABOVE Trofast Storage combination with bins, £50.50, Trofast wall storage, from £34, Stuva storage cabinet, £140, Bondis Wall clock, £15, Kritter children's table, £22, Mammut children's stool, £5, all Ikea. Other items, stylist's own

RIGHT Ashcroft box trays, £23 each, Somerton rectangular basket, £45, Ashcroft soft square basket, £40, all Neptune (neptune.com). Other items, stylist's own



Acrylic organiser, from £11.99, John Lewis

Vicky says:

- Use skinny hangers to gain extra space in your wardrobe.



Wall storage hanger, £12.99, H&M (hm.com)

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GOOD★FOOD

23 pages of recipes & advice



Pomegranate Sparklers

We've sprinkled edible gold stars (from lakeland.co.uk) over our cocktails for added wow factor.

Into a jug, measure **60ml (2½fl oz) Cointreau** and **150ml (5fl oz) pomegranate juice**; divide among 6-8 Champagne flutes and top with **chilled Champagne or prosecco** to serve.

One
sentence
recipe

RAISE A GLASS

Welcome 2016 with a wee dram and our sumptuous Hogmanay-inspired menu



REFRESH

AND REVIVE
Healthy, hearty dishes to nourish body and soul



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Shop-bought canapés, super-size fizz... and the best sticky toffee pudding!



HAPPY New Year



MENU FOR 8

Auld Lang Syne
Wee Scotch Eggs

Crumbed Creamy Scallops

Roast Rack of Venison
with Port and
Blueberry Sauce
Crispy Hazelnut Kale
Parsnip, Swede and
Potato Mash

Onion Tatin (v)

Chilled Chocolate and
Whisky Soufflés with
Salted Butterscotch Sauce

Mini Oatcakes with
Smoked Salmon or
Vegetarian Haggis
Honey Porridge Bites



Get the New Year started in style with our glamorous Hogmanay-inspired menu. Our decadent (but oh-so-achievable) recipes are just the ticket to make your night fizz with success – and we guarantee you won't be chained to the kitchen

PHOTOGRAPHY MYLES NEW





Wee Scotch Eggs

When frying, monitor the heat under your pan or use a digital thermometer to ensure oil stays at an even temperature.

Hands-on time **40min**, plus cooling and chilling. Cooking time **about 20min**. Makes **16**

- ◆ **16 fresh quail eggs**
- ◆ **650g (1lb 7oz) Cumberland sausages, skinned**
- ◆ **40g (1½oz) plain flour**
- ◆ **2 medium eggs, beaten**
- ◆ **100g (3½oz) fresh white breadcrumbs**
- ◆ **Vegetable oil, to fry**

1 In a large pan of boiling water, cook quail eggs for 2min exactly. Transfer to a large bowl of iced water. Set aside to cool completely. Lift eggs out and carefully peel (they will feel soft). **2** In the palm of your hand, flatten about 40g (1½oz) sausage meat into a circle about 9cm (3½in) wide. Put a quail egg in the centre and carefully draw up the edges of the sausage meat to encase it. Carefully roll into a ball. Repeat with remaining eggs and sausage meat. Set balls on a baking tray, cover and chill for 30min.

3 Put the flour, beaten eggs and breadcrumbs into three separate bowls. Coat each ball in flour (tap off excess), then egg, then coat in breadcrumbs. **4** Fill a large, deep pan (with a lid) with oil to 7.5cm (3in) deep. Heat oil to 180°C or until a cube of bread turns golden in 15sec. **5** Using a slotted spoon, lower four Scotch eggs into the oil and cook for 4min. Lift out on to kitchen paper. Repeat with remaining Scotch eggs, monitoring the oil temperature as you go. For runny centres, serve immediately (eggs will continue to cook on cooling). Sprinkle with salt and serve with mustard. **PER EGG** 197cals, 7g protein, 16g fat (5g saturates), 7g carbs (1g total sugars), 1g fibre **GET AHEAD** Complete recipe up to 2 days ahead. Store cooled eggs, covered, in fridge. To serve, transfer to a baking tray, preheat oven to 180°C (160°C fan) mark 4 and reheat for 8min (yolks will be cooked through).

Auld Lang Syne

A delicious tipple with any dry sparkling wine.

Put a **sugar cube** into a Champagne glass. Add **1tsp whisky**, **2tbsp clear apple juice** and **125ml (4fl oz) chilled Champagne or white sparkling wine**. Serve immediately.

PER COCKTAIL 133cals, 0g protein, 0g fat (0g saturates), 5g carbs (5g total sugars), 0g fibre

Crumbed Creamy Scallops

Served in their shells, the scallops make a stylish starter that's simple to prepare and a delight to eat.

Hands-on time **20min**. Cooking time **about 20min**. Serves **8**

- ◆ **24 large roe-free scallops**
- FOR THE SAUCE**
- ◆ **25g (1oz) butter, softened**
- ◆ **25g (1oz) plain flour**
- ◆ **200ml (7fl oz) fish stock**
- ◆ **100ml (3½fl oz) double cream**
- ◆ **2 medium egg yolks**
- FOR THE CRUMB**
- ◆ **50g (2oz) fresh white breadcrumbs**
- ◆ **25g (1oz) butter, melted**
- ◆ **3 thyme sprigs, leaves picked**
- ◆ **Finely grated zest ½ lemon**
- YOU'LL ALSO NEED**
- ◆ **8 large curved scallop shells (see GH Tips)**

1 Prepare the scallops: peel off and discard the tough white muscle from each scallop (if present). Pat scallops dry with kitchen paper. Set aside. **2** To make the sauce, melt butter in a medium pan. Add flour and cook, stirring, for 30sec. Take off heat and gradually stir in stock to make a smooth sauce. Return to heat and cook, stirring, until thickened (the mixture will

need to bubble). Take off heat, stir in the cream and yolks and check the seasoning. Set aside. **3** In a small bowl, mix together crumb ingredients with some seasoning. **4** Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan) mark 6. Arrange three scallops in each shell, then sit shells on a large baking tray (see GH Tips). Spoon over the sauce and top with the crumbs. **5** Cook in the oven for 15-17min or until golden and bubbling. Serve immediately. **PER SERVING** 243cals, 21g protein, 15g fat (8g saturates), 7g carbs (1g total sugars), 0g fibre **GET AHEAD** Complete steps 1 and 3 up to 4hr ahead. Keep scallops and crumb separate, covered, in fridge. Complete recipe to serve. **GH TIPS** ★ Before use, wash scallop shells in hot soapy water. Next, put into a pan of boiling water and bubble for 5min to sterilise. ★ Shells will need to sit level on the tray to prevent the sauce leaking. Use scrunched-up foil to help stabilise them, if needed.



Luxurious bites

Roast Rack of Venison with Port and Blueberry Sauce

We used two venison racks to serve eight people. For more about choosing and cooking venison, see goodhousekeeping.co.uk/venison-guide

Hands-on time **25min**, plus resting. Cooking time **about 55min**. Serves **8**

- ◆ 8 shallots
- ◆ 2 racks venison, about 1.5kg (3lb 3½oz) in total
- ◆ 4tbsp oil
- ◆ 1tsp ground allspice
- ◆ 1 garlic clove, crushed
- ◆ 3 thyme sprigs
- ◆ 200ml (⅔ pint) ruby port
- ◆ 1tbsp cornflour
- ◆ 400ml (14fl oz) beef stock
- ◆ 2tbsp blueberry or blackberry jam
- ◆ 1tbsp balsamic vinegar
- ◆ 250g (9oz) blueberries

1 Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan) mark 6. Roughly chop four shallots (no need to peel) and scatter into a roasting tin large enough to hold both venison racks later on. Weigh the racks separately and make a note of the average weight. Calculate cooking time for this average weight based on 20min per 450g (1lb).

2 Rub 2tbsp oil and the ground allspice over the venison. Season well. Heat a large frying pan and fry meat (in batches if needed) until golden – about 3min. Lift out of pan (reserving pan) and put into the prepared roasting tin.

3 Roast racks together for the calculated cooking time (an average 750g/1lb 10½oz rack should take 33min). To check whether venison is cooked to medium rare, insert a metal skewer into the centre of the meat and hold for 5sec – it should come out warm. If not, return tin to oven for a further 2min.

4 When cooked, transfer racks to a board, cover with foil and let rest for 20min.

5 Peel and finely slice the remaining shallots. In the reserved pan, heat remaining 2tbsp oil and fry shallots for 4min until softened. Add garlic and thyme sprigs and cook for 1min. Pour in port, increase heat and simmer for 2min until reduced by half. Put cornflour into a small bowl, add 2tbsp of the stock and mix to a smooth paste. Mix the remaining stock, jam, balsamic vinegar and the cornflour mixture into the pan. Bring to the boil, then simmer for a further 5min until sauce has thickened slightly. Add the blueberries for the final 1min of simmering. Discard thyme sprigs and season to taste.

6 Transfer racks to a serving

platter. Serve the venison with the sauce.

PER SERVING (2 cutlets with sauce) **325cal, 38g protein, 9g fat (2g saturates), 15g carbs (11g total sugars), 1g fibre**

GET AHEAD Complete steps 1, 2 and 5 up to a day ahead, but don't add the blueberries to the sauce. Cool browned venison racks in tin, then cover and chill. Cool sauce completely, then cover and chill. To serve, remove venison from fridge 1hr before continuing with step 3. In a medium pan, reheat sauce with blueberries until piping hot.

Hearty main dish



AND TO DRINK

GH Wine Expert Richard Ehrlich's choice:

'Venison is big stuff, and needs a big wine – but fruit flavours add an extra element of complexity. So I'd choose something that combines lush, ripe berry flavours with a little spice and soft tannins.'

Viña Ventisquero Root 1 Carménère 2013 (13.5% ABV, £8, Morrisons), from the Colchagua Valley in Chile, does the trick very nicely.'



Crispy Hazelnut Kale

Oven-cooked kale makes a great side and is an alternative to the traditionally served game chips.

Hands-on time **10min**. Cooking time **about 15min**. Serves **8**

Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan) mark 6. Finely chop **250g (9oz) kale** (discard woody stems) and put on to a large baking tray. Mix through **5tbsp sunflower oil**, **100g (3½oz) chopped hazelnuts** and a generous sprinkling of salt. Spread mixture to an even layer. Cook in oven for 10-15min (tossing half way through) until crisp. Serve hot or at room temperature.

PER SERVING 160cals, 3g protein, 15g fat (2g saturates), 1g carbs (1g total sugars), 2g fibre

Parsnip, Swede and Potato Mash

A superb seasonal dish that works well with roast game and meat.

Hands-on time **20min**, plus steaming. Cooking time **about 25min**. Serves **8**

Bring a large pan of water to the boil. Meanwhile, peel **1 swede (about 600g/1lb 5oz)**, **800g (1lb 12oz) floury potatoes** and **500g (1lb 2oz) parsnips**. Cut into rough 3cm (1¼in) chunks. Add the swede to the boiling water and cook for 5min, then add the remaining vegetables and cook for a further 20min, or until completely tender. Drain veg into a colander set in a sink and leave to steam dry for 10min. Return vegetables to the empty pan and mash until smooth. Over a gentle heat, beat in **50g (2oz) cubed butter** and season to taste. Serve piping hot.

PER SERVING 196cals, 4g protein, 6g fat (3g saturates), 27g carbs (8g total sugars), 8g fibre

GET AHEAD Prepare, cook and mash veg up to a day ahead. Cool completely, cover, and chill. To serve, complete recipe, stirring mash frequently until piping hot (and a splash of milk, if needed).



Get-ahead vegetarian

Onion Tatin

This tart works wonderfully with the other flavours in this menu, so can be served as a vegetarian option or as an additional side.

Hands-on time **30min**, plus cooling. Cooking time **about 45min**. Serves **4** as a main or **8** as a side dish.

- ◆ **320g sheet ready-rolled puff pastry**
 - ◆ **About 800g (1lb 12oz) medium-sized red onions**
 - ◆ **25g (1oz) butter**
 - ◆ **1tbsp olive oil**
 - ◆ **1tsp caster sugar**
 - ◆ **3 thyme sprigs, leaves picked, plus extra to garnish**
 - ◆ **100ml (3½fl oz) port**
 - ◆ **1 garlic clove, crushed**
- YOU'LL ALSO NEED**
- ◆ **A 23cm (9in) ovenproof frying pan**

1 Unroll the pastry and cut out a circle 1cm (½in) larger in diameter than the rim of your frying pan. Transfer pastry to a baking sheet and chill until needed. Preheat oven to 190°C (170°C fan) mark 5.

2 Peel and cut onions into equal-size wedges through the root (this will help keep layers together).

3 Melt butter, oil and sugar in the frying pan. Take off heat and arrange onions in concentric circles, with a cut side down. Return pan to medium heat and fry for 10-12min until onions are beginning to caramelize on the underside (try not to disturb wedges or they'll lose their shape).

4 Add thyme leaves, port, garlic, and plenty of seasoning. Bubble for 3min, then remove from heat and cool for 10min.

5 Carefully cover onions with the pastry circle, tucking pastry down into the sides. Make a few small slits in the pastry with a sharp knife to allow steam to escape.

6 Put pan into the oven for 20-25min or until pastry is puffed and golden. Rest it at room temperature for 5min, then carefully invert on to a board or plate. Garnish with more thyme, if you like, and serve hot or at room temperature.

PER SERVING (if serving 4) **390cals, 5g protein, 22g fat (11g saturates), 34g carbs (15g total sugars), 4g fibre**

Chilled Chocolate and Whisky Soufflés with Salted Butterscotch Sauce

Wrapping a paper collar around the ramekins allows the mixture to set above the rim, giving a soufflé effect. If you prefer, set the mousse in glasses or a large serving dish.

Hands-on time **35min**, plus cooling and chilling. Cooking time **about 15min**. Serves **8**

- ◆ **150g (5oz) plain chocolate**, 70% cocoa solids, finely chopped
- ◆ **4tbsp whisky**
- ◆ **500ml (17fl oz) whole milk**
- ◆ **1tbsp instant coffee granules**
- ◆ **4 medium eggs**, separated
- ◆ **125g (4oz) caster sugar**
- ◆ **4 gelatine leaves**, we used Costa Fine-Leaf
- ◆ **200ml (7fl oz) double cream**
- FOR THE SAUCE**
- ◆ **60g (2½oz) butter**
- ◆ **100g (3½oz) dark brown soft sugar**
- ◆ **125ml (4fl oz) double cream**

1 Prepare the ramekins. Wrap a double thickness of baking parchment around the outside of eight 110ml (3¾oz) ramekins, making sure it comes at least 2.5cm (1in) above the top of the ramekin. Secure around the base with a rubber band to hold the parchment tightly in place. Put chocolate and whisky into a medium bowl and set aside.

2 In a large pan, heat the milk and coffee until piping hot (but not boiling). Meanwhile, in a separate large bowl, beat egg yolks and caster sugar until well combined. In another bowl, cover gelatine with cold water and set aside to soften for 5min.

3 Gradually pour hot milk mixture into the egg yolk bowl, stirring constantly. Return mixture to the empty pan. Heat, stirring constantly, until mixture is thick enough to coat back of spoon – about 5min. It



Make-ahead pudding

should be steaming, but do not allow it to boil or it will scramble.

4 Pour hot mixture into the chocolate bowl. Lift gelatine out of water (squeeze out excess) and add to the same bowl. Stir until chocolate is melted and mixture is combined. Cover surface with clingfilm (to prevent a skin forming) and set aside to cool completely.

5 When the custard is cool, in a large bowl whip the cream until it holds soft peaks. Add cooled chocolate mixture to the cream bowl and whisk to combine. In a separate large clean bowl with clean whisks, whip egg whites

until they hold firm peaks. Add to the chocolate mixture and fold together (tricky at first, but have patience – the mixture will come together).

6 Pour the mixture into a large jug, then divide among the ramekins (the collar should contain the mixture above the top of the ramekin). Chill to set – at least 5hr.

7 For the salted butterscotch, melt the butter in a medium pan over medium heat. Add the sugar, cream and ¼tsp salt. Bring to the boil, then simmer for 3-5min, stirring occasionally, until thickened. Take off heat

and taste carefully (it will be hot). Add more salt if needed. Allow to cool for 5min.

8 To serve, carefully peel off the baking parchment collars from the soufflés. Serve with the hot salted butterscotch sauce.

PER SOUFFLÉ (with 2tbsp sauce) **566cal**, **8g protein**, **38g fat** (**23g saturates**), **43g carbs** (**43g total sugars**), **1g fibre**

GET AHEAD Prepare to end of step 6 up to a day ahead. Cool sauce, then cover and chill. To serve, gently reheat sauce in a pan and complete recipe.





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Midnight Munchies

Because it's nice to see in the New Year with a nibble!



Mini Oatcakes

Making your own oatcakes is well worth the effort. Not only can they be made in advance, but they taste great – and oatbran is high in fibre and can help to lower cholesterol. We've made two toppings, each enough to top half the oatcakes (see right).

Hands-on time **20min**, plus cooling. Cooking time **about 30min**. Makes about **44**

- ◆ **225g (8oz) oatbran, plus extra to dust**
- ◆ **25g (1oz) porridge oats**
- ◆ **½tsp bicarbonate of soda**
- ◆ **1tsp caster sugar**
- ◆ **50g (2oz) butter**

- 1** Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan) mark 6. Line two baking sheets with baking parchment. In large bowl, mix together the oatbran, oats, soda, sugar and 1tsp salt.
 - 2** In a small pan, melt the butter with 125ml (4fl oz) water. Make a well in the dry ingredients and pour in the butter mixture. Stir well to coat evenly, then let the mixture sit for a few minutes to cool – the dough will be sticky at first, but will continue to absorb the water and become easier to work with. Knead the dough in the bowl to bring it together.
 - 3** Lightly dust a work surface with oatbran and pat out the dough to 3mm (¼in) thick. Use a 5cm (2in) round cutter to stamp out circles (re-working the dough as you go) – you should have about 44. Arrange on the prepared baking sheets, spacing 1cm (½in) apart.
 - 4** Bake for 20–25min, until they feel firm and smell toasted. Cool completely on the trays before topping.
- PER OATCAKE** 30cals, 1g protein, 2g fat (1g saturates), 3g carbs (0g total sugars), 1g fibre
- TO STORE** The cooled oatcakes can be stored in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 weeks.

Smoked Salmon Oatcakes

(enough for 22 canapés)

Up to 30min before serving, **mix 100g (3½oz) crème fraîche** with **1tbsp chopped fresh dill** and some **seasoning**. Dollop 1tsp mixture on to **half the oatcakes (about 22)**. Top each with some **smoked salmon strips (about 100g/3½oz in total)**. Garnish with dill and some **freshly ground black pepper**. **PER SALMON CANAPÉ** 54cals, 2g protein, 4g fat (2g saturates), 3g carbs (0g total sugars), 1g fibre

Vegetarian Haggis Oatcakes

(enough for 22 canapés)

Up to 10min before serving, roughly chop **175g (6oz) vegetarian haggis** (we used McSween) and put into a microwavable bowl. Mix in **1tbsp chopped fresh parsley**, cover bowl with clingfilm and pierce a few times. Microwave on medium heat for 10min (stirring halfway) until piping hot. Spread some **redcurrant jelly** over **half the oatcakes (about 22)** and top each with 1tsp of the haggis mixture. Sprinkle over some more **chopped parsley** and serve warm. **PER HAGGIS CANAPÉ** 58cals, 1g protein, 2g fat (1g saturates), 8g carbs (3g total sugars), 2g fibre

Honey Porridge Bites

Decorate with indoor sparklers to add fun factor.

Hands-on time **20min**, plus cooling and (overnight) setting. Cooking time **about 40min**. Makes **25 bites**

FOR THE BASE

- ◆ **50g (2oz) unsalted butter, plus extra to grease**
 - ◆ **125g (4oz) porridge oats**
 - ◆ **50g (2oz) caster sugar**
 - ◆ **40g (1½oz) runny honey**
- ### FOR THE TOPPING
- ◆ **50g (2oz) golden syrup**
 - ◆ **100g (3½oz) caster sugar**
 - ◆ **397g tin condensed milk**
 - ◆ **125g (4oz) unsalted butter**
 - ◆ **300g (11oz) plain chocolate, chopped**
 - ◆ **Indoor sparklers, optional**

- 1** Preheat oven to 180°C (160°C fan) mark 4. Lightly grease a 20.5cm (8in) square cake tin and line with baking parchment, making sure it's 2.5cm (1in) higher than the sides.
 - 2** In a medium pan over a medium heat, melt the butter. Stir in the oats, sugar and honey. Spoon mixture into prepared tin and flatten. Bake in oven for 12min until golden. Set aside.
 - 3** In the cleaned-out pan, bring golden syrup, caster sugar, condensed milk and 100g (3½oz) butter to the boil, whisking constantly. Bubble for 5min, whisking until mixture is an even, rich caramel colour (scrape any dark caramel from edges of the pan with a wooden spoon and whisk it in). Carefully pour over the oat mixture. Set aside.
 - 4** In a medium heatproof bowl set over a pan of barely simmering water, melt chocolate and remaining butter. Pour over caramel and spread in an even layer. Cool at room temperature until solid – about 5hrs, or ideally overnight.
 - 5** Lift out of tin using excess baking parchment and cut into 25 squares. **PER BITE** 224cals, 3g protein, 11g fat (7g saturates), 28g carbs (24g total sugars), 1g fibre
- GET AHEAD** Store squares in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 5 days. □

Nourish

Once the season of rich overindulgence is done, refuel your body and reawaken your tastebuds with some fresh and full-on flavours. Our Triple-Tested recipes are just what the doctor ordered!

PHOTOGRAPHY **WILL HEAP**



Good for you

Colourful Pattie Stack

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*New family
favourite*
Fish Tacos





Colourful Pattie Stack DF GF

These patties are packed with vegetables and baked rather than fried.

Hands-on time **25min**. Cooking time **about 20min**. Serves **4**

- ◆ 1 small sweet potato, about 175g (6oz), coarsely grated
- ◆ 1 medium courgette, coarsely grated
- ◆ 2tbsp chipotle paste (we used Santa Maria)
- ◆ 75g (3oz) ground almonds
- ◆ 195g tin of sweetcorn, drained
- ◆ Small bunch coriander, chopped
- ◆ Bunch of spring onions, finely sliced
- ◆ 6 large eggs
- ◆ 2 avocados, peeled, stoned and chopped
- ◆ Zest and juice 1 lime

- 1 Preheat oven to 190°C (170°C fan) mark 5. Line two baking sheets with baking parchment.
- 2 In a large bowl mix the sweet potato, courgette, chipotle paste, ground almonds, sweetcorn, most of the coriander, half the spring onions, 2 of the eggs and some seasoning.
- 3 With wet hands, form into 12 patties and arrange on the prepared baking sheets, spacing about 4cm (1½in) apart. Cook in the oven for 20min until golden. Bring a large, deep pan of water to the boil.
- 4 Meanwhile, in a small bowl, mix the avocados with the remaining coriander and spring onions, and lime zest and juice. Set aside.
- 5 Reduce the boiling water temperature to a simmer. Crack an egg into a ramekin, then neatly pour the egg into the simmering water. Working quickly, add the remaining 3 eggs in a similar fashion. Poach for 4min – or until, when lifted out with a slotted spoon, whites feel firm but the yolk remains soft. Lift eggs out with a slotted spoon and drain on kitchen paper.
- 6 For each person, serve three patties topped with a poached egg, with a spoonful of avocado mixture alongside.

PER SERVING 511cals, 20g protein, 36g fat (7g saturates), 23g carbs (9g total sugars), 8g fibre



Fish Tacos

Perfect if you're craving a bit of sunshine in the depths of Winter. Our home-made tacos have a wonderful toasty flavour.

Hands-on time **30min**. Cooking time **about 15min**. Serves **4**

- ◆ 4 wholemeal tortillas
- ◆ 4tbsp vegetable oil
- ◆ 50g (2oz) plain flour
- ◆ ½tsp ground cumin
- ◆ 3tbsp smoked sweet paprika
- ◆ 450g (1lb) white flaky fish fillets, such as pollock or cod, skinless
- ◆ 200g (7oz) low-fat yogurt
- ◆ ¼ red cabbage, finely shredded
- ◆ 1 avocado, peeled, stoned and sliced

FOR THE SALSA

- ◆ 1 mango, peeled, stoned and diced
- ◆ 1-2 red chillies, deseeded and finely chopped
- ◆ ½ small red onion, finely chopped
- ◆ Finely grated zest and juice 2 limes
- ◆ Handful fresh coriander, chopped

- 1 Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan) mark 6, making sure there is a rack/tray in the oven. To make the salsa, combine all the ingredients in a serving bowl and set aside.
- 2 Brush tortillas on both sides with 2tbsp of the oil. Loosely fold each tortilla in half and place all four directly on the oven rack/tray, spaced apart. Cook for 5-8min (turning halfway through) until crisp and holding their shape. Carefully open up the tortillas slightly, to set the taco shape, and set aside to cool.
- 3 Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, mix the flour, cumin, 2tbsp of the paprika and some seasoning. Toss the fish in the flour mixture (tap off excess).
- 4 Heat remaining 2tbsp oil in a large frying pan over a high heat and fry the fish for 3-5min, turning once, until golden and cooked through. Flake the fish into a serving bowl and set aside.
- 5 In another bowl, mix the yogurt with the remaining smoked paprika. Bring to the table along with the tacos, salsa, fish, cabbage and avocado, and let everyone tuck in.

PER SERVING 461cals, 31g protein, 25g fat (4g saturates), 26g carbs (15g total sugars), 7g fibre

Rainbow Salad GF

Wonderfully bright and brimming with goodness. Any leftovers make a satisfying packed lunch.

Hands-on time **15min**, plus cooling. Cooking time **about 15min**. Serves **4**

- ◆ 200g (7oz) quinoa
- ◆ 125g (4oz) shelled edamame beans, defrosted if frozen
- ◆ ½ red onion, finely sliced
- ◆ Large handful spinach, rocket or watercress
- ◆ Handful cherry tomatoes, quartered
- ◆ ¼ small red cabbage, finely shredded
- ◆ 1 yellow pepper, deseeded and finely chopped
- ◆ 40g (1½oz) pumpkin seeds
- ◆ 50g (2oz) skin-on almonds, roughly chopped

FOR THE DRESSING

- ◆ 3tbsp white wine vinegar
- ◆ 1½tbsp Dijon mustard
- ◆ 3tbsp extra virgin olive oil

- 1 Wash the quinoa in a sieve under cold running water. Put into a medium pan, add 500ml (17fl oz) water and bring to the boil. Cover and simmer for 10min or until the grains are tender. Cool for 15min.
- 2 Fluff up the cooled quinoa with a fork and put into a large bowl. Mix through the edamame beans, onion, greens, tomatoes, cabbage and yellow pepper.
- 3 In a small bowl, mix together the dressing ingredients and toss through the salad. Check the seasoning. Garnish with the pumpkin seeds and almonds, and serve.

PER SERVING 439cals, 17g protein, 24g fat (3g saturates), 36g carbs (9g total sugars), 6g fibre

Super Salad



- GF** **Gluten free** – This recipe is gluten free, but always check that all ingredients, eg stock or soy sauce, are suitable for those avoiding gluten.
- DF** **Dairy free** – This recipe is dairy free, but always check that all ingredients, eg bread, are suitable for those avoiding dairy.



Easy way to 5-a-day



Salmon & Orange Stir-fry DF GF

Have all your vegetables chopped and ready to go before you start cooking.

Hands-on time **20min**, plus marinating. Cooking time **about 15min**. Serves 4

- ◆ 4 salmon fillets, skinless
- ◆ 1 orange, peeled and sliced into rounds
- ◆ 1tbsp vegetable oil
- ◆ 1 small head broccoli, trimmed into small florets
- ◆ 2.5cm (1in) piece fresh root ginger, peeled and finely grated
- ◆ 1 garlic glove, crushed
- ◆ 1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
- ◆ 3 red peppers, deseeded and sliced
- ◆ 500g (1lb 2oz) pak choi, each cut into 4-5 pieces lengthways
- ◆ 50g (2oz) radishes, finely sliced
- ◆ 2 spring onions, finely sliced
- ◆ Small bunch coriander, roughly chopped

FOR THE MARINADE

- ◆ 3tbsp soy sauce
- ◆ 2tsp toasted sesame oil
- ◆ Zest and juice 1 orange
- ◆ 2tsp runny honey

- 1 Stir together the marinade ingredients in a large non-metallic bowl. Add the salmon, mix and set aside to marinate for 15min.
 - 2 Heat a large frying pan or wok over medium-high heat. Lift salmon out of the marinade (reserve marinade) and fry for 5min, turning once, until golden and cooked through. Lift on to a board, cover with foil and set aside.
 - 3 To the empty pan/wok, add the orange slices and fry for 1min on each side until golden. Lift on to a plate and set aside.
 - 4 Turn up the heat under the pan/wok to high and add the oil. Stir-fry the broccoli for 4-5min until almost tender. Add the ginger, garlic, chilli, red peppers, pak choi and reserved marinade and fry for a few minutes until vegetables are just tender.
 - 5 Quickly toss through the radishes, spring onions, coriander and fried orange slices. Serve immediately, topped with the salmon.
- PER SERVING** 400cal, 32g protein, 21g fat (3g saturates), 17g carbs (17g total sugars), 8g fibre

Buckwheat, Mushroom and Ham Risotto GF

A seed, not a grain, buckwheat is full of amino acids, vitamins and minerals.

Hands-on time **15min**. Cooking time **about 25min**. Serves 4

- ◆ 2tbsp olive oil
- ◆ 400g (14oz) mixed mushrooms (we used chestnut, oyster and shiitake), roughly chopped
- ◆ 1 onion, finely chopped
- ◆ 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- ◆ 250g (9oz) buckwheat, washed
- ◆ 600ml (1 pint) chicken stock
- ◆ 90g pack ham hock
- ◆ 75g (3oz) light cream cheese
- ◆ 50g (2oz) baby spinach, rocket or watercress
- ◆ Large handful fresh parsley, roughly chopped
- ◆ 75g (3oz) Parmesan, grated

- 1 Heat 1tbsp oil in a large pan over high heat. Fry mushrooms for 5min, or until tender and there's no liquid in the pan. Empty into a bowl and set aside.
 - 2 Return pan to low-medium heat, add remaining oil and gently fry onion for 5min, stirring occasionally, until softened. Stir in garlic and buckwheat and cook for 1min. Add the stock. Bring to the boil, then simmer gently for 10min, stirring occasionally, until buckwheat is tender and most of the stock has been absorbed.
 - 3 Stir in the mushrooms, ham, cream cheese, greens and most of the parsley and Parmesan. Check the seasoning. Garnish with remaining parsley and cheese, and serve.
- PER SERVING** 487cal, 29g protein, 16g fat (6g saturates), 55g carbs (4g total sugars), 5g fibre



TRIED, TESTED, TRUSTED

You can always rely on Good Housekeeping's recipes to work first time. One of the Cookery Team develops each recipe we feature until they're happy it's perfect. Another member of the team then makes it again to ensure the method is foolproof (at which stage the food is also tasted by lots of other key magazine members). Our third and final test happens on the photoshoot. So that's a minimum of three tests for every single recipe - our guarantee to you that they'll work! Remember to always use calibrated measuring spoons and accurate scales for ultimate success.



Neswidesa





Fresh flavours

Thai Green Chicken Soup DF GF

Chicken soup is food for the soul, and with added Thai flavours, this version makes an ideal Winter pick-me-up.

Hands-on time **15min**. Cooking time **about 20min**. Serves **4**

- ◆ 1tbsp oil
- ◆ 2tbsp Thai green curry paste
- ◆ 450g (1lb) chicken breasts, skinned and cut into bite-size pieces
- ◆ 160ml tin coconut milk
- ◆ 1.1 litre (2 pint) chicken stock
- ◆ 1-2 green chillies, deseeded and finely sliced
- ◆ 2.5cm (1in) piece fresh root ginger, peeled and finely grated
- ◆ 100g (3½oz) dried vermicelli rice noodles
- ◆ 175g (6oz) baby sweetcorn, roughly chopped
- ◆ 200g (7oz) sugar snap peas
- ◆ 2 heads pak choy, roughly chopped
- ◆ Juice 1 lime, plus wedges to serve
- ◆ Small bunch coriander, roughly chopped

- 1** In a large pan, heat the oil and add the curry paste. Fry for 2min until aromatic, then add the chicken and coat in the paste. Add the coconut milk and stir to combine, then add the stock, chillies and ginger. Bring to the boil and simmer for 10-12min or until chicken is cooked.
 - 2** Add the noodles, sweetcorn, sugar snap peas, pak choy, lime juice and coriander. Simmer for 3-5min until noodles are tender. Check seasoning and serve with extra lime wedges.
- PER SERVING** 373cal, 42g protein, 14g fat (6g saturates), 19g carbs (6g total sugars), 4g fibre

Shakshuka DF GF

We've added pulses to bulk up this Middle Eastern breakfast dish. Make sure your eggs are the freshest possible to poach neatly.

Hands-on time **15min**. Cooking time **about 45min**. Serves **4**

- ◆ 2tbsp olive oil
- ◆ 1 onion, chopped
- ◆ 1 each red and green pepper, deseeded and chopped
- ◆ 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- ◆ 2tbsp harissa paste
- ◆ 1tbsp tomato purée
- ◆ 950g (2lb 2oz) ripe tomatoes, roughly chopped
- ◆ ½tsp sugar
- ◆ 2tsp red wine vinegar
- ◆ 400g tin chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- ◆ 4 large eggs

- 1** In a large frying pan, heat the oil and gently fry the onion and peppers until beginning to soften, about 15min.
 - 2** Add the garlic, harissa paste and tomato purée, stirring for 1min. Add the tomatoes, sugar, vinegar and chickpeas. Reduce the heat and simmer gently for 15min until tomatoes are tender and pulpy.
 - 3** Make four indentations in the sauce and crack an egg into each. Spread the egg whites into the sauce slightly but don't burst the yolks.
 - 4** Simmer gently, covered, for 15min or until egg whites are cooked but yolks are still runny. Serve.
- PER SERVING** 319cal, 15g protein, 15g fat (3g saturates), 26g carbs (15g total sugars), 9g fibre



Spicy wake-up

RECIPES: MEIKE BECK, SUZANNAH BUTCHER, ELIZABETH HUTCHINSON AND MADELINE BURKITT. FOOD STYLING: MEIKE BECK, ELIZABETH HUTCHINSON. PROP STYLING: POLLY WEBB-WILSON. RECIPE TESTING: MADELINE BURKITT

Kale Polpette with Watercress Pesto

Polpette may mean meatballs in Italian, but these are packed with vegetables and lentils instead.

Hands-on time **25min**, plus cooling.

Cooking time **about 30min**. Serves **4**

- ◆ 250g (9oz) kale, leaves only (discard woody stalks)
- ◆ 400g tin lentils, drained and rinsed
- ◆ 1 large egg
- ◆ 125g (4oz) fresh breadcrumbs
- ◆ 75g (3oz) Parmesan or vegetarian hard cheese, finely grated
- ◆ 3tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus extra to grease
- ◆ 1 garlic clove
- ◆ Zest and juice 1 lemon
- ◆ 75g (3oz) blanched hazelnuts
- ◆ 100g (3½oz) watercress
- ◆ 200g (7oz) wholewheat spaghetti

1 Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan) mark 6. Line a baking tray with baking parchment. In a large pan, gently cook the kale for 3min in 75ml (3fl oz) of water to wilt (stir often).

Set aside to cool slightly.

2 Put the lentils, egg, breadcrumbs and hard cheese into a food processor. Whiz to form a thick paste. Lift up handfuls of cooled kale (set aside empty pan) and squeeze out excess moisture. Add kale to food processor with some seasoning and whiz to combine.

3 With lightly greased hands, roll kale mixture into 20 balls. Set on prepared baking tray and brush with 1tbsp of the oil. Cook in the oven for 20min until golden. Fill reserved pan with salted water and bring to the boil.

4 Meanwhile, in the cleaned-out food processor, whiz the garlic, lemon zest and

juice, remaining 2tbsp oil, the hazelnuts, 75g (3oz) of the watercress, ¼tsp salt and 100ml (3½fl oz) water to make a chunky pesto. Set aside.

5 In the large pan of salted boiling water, cook the pasta according to pack instructions **until al dente**. Drain, reserving 75ml (3fl oz) pasta water.

6 Return pasta to the empty pan and toss through the pesto, polpette and reserved cooking water. Check the seasoning. Divide among four warm bowls and scatter with remaining watercress. Serve.

PER SERVING 689cals, 30g protein, 30g fat (6g saturates), 67g carbs (5g total sugars), 14g fibre

Clean
greens



THE NEW PACK

NEW

KETTLE
CHIPS
**CHEF'S
SIGNATURE**



**YORKSHIRE
WENSLEYDALE
& COX APPLE CHUTNEY**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



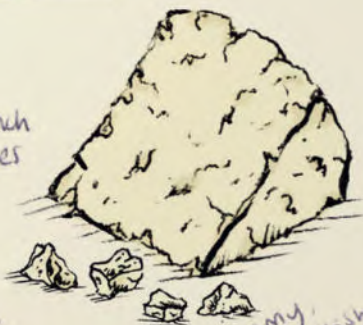
**YORKSHIRE
WENSLEYDALE**



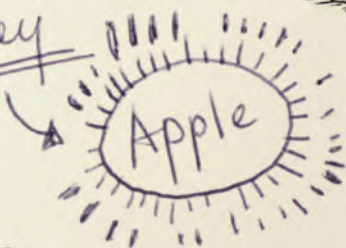
WHAT WORKS WITH WENSLEYDALE?



Quince } for French
Grapes } cheeses



Chutney



creamy,
crumbly & British



BRITISH NICE
SWEETNESS



Chutney Recipe

- ① Roughly chop apples
- ② Mix with sugar, ginger, onions + a pinch of cassia
- ③ Simmer and stir for 40 mins
- ④ Leave to cool and put in jars



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Chris Barnard

Chris Barnard, KETTLE® chef since 1989.

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Christmas dinner

THAT COSTS JUST £2.53!

Good news! The cost of a Christmas dinner is down by nearly 5% from last year. GH reveals where to shop for the cheapest

Every year, the GHI compares the prices of 11 Christmas dinner essentials* from the leading supermarkets to find the cheapest. And the good news is that our bargain basket – made up of the cheapest products across the board – costs even less than it did in 2014!

A basket of festive food to feed eight people costs a total of £20.26 – or just £2.53 per person. Last year's cheapest composite basket totalled £21.31, making this year's basket 4.9% cheaper.

So, drumroll please... The crown of cheapest supermarket goes to Iceland, as it did last year, with

a basket that costs just £24.81.

Surprisingly, Tesco and Morrisons have jumped ahead of last year's runner-up, discounter Lidl. At the other end of the table, Waitrose has overtaken Marks & Spencer as the priciest place to buy your festive feast, with baskets from both costing more than £45.

'The fierce competition between the big supermarket chains and discounters that continues to keep prices keen is welcome news,' says GH Consumer Director, Caroline Bloor. 'Splitting allegiance between different supermarkets, both online and on the high street, is increasingly the norm.'

SUPERMARKET SWEEPSTAKE!

How the top 10 baskets compare

1	ICELAND	£24.81
2	TESCO	£25.77
3	MORRISONS	£26.17
4	LIDL	£30.31
5	THE CO-OP	£30.45
6	ALDI	£31.96
7	ASDA	£32.80
8	SAINSBURY'S	£34.14
9	M&S	£45.57
10	WAITROSE	£47.84

BUDGET BASKET

Has the price gone up, gone down or stayed the same since last year?

DESCRIPTION

▼	TURKEY LIDL BRAEMOOR, 2.8-4kg	£8.99
▼	POTATOES MORRISONS MARIS PIPER, 2.5kg	£1
=	SAGE & ONION STUFFING ASDA, MORRISONS, SAINSBURY'S, 2 x 85g	£0.30
▲	BRUSSELS SPROUTS THE CO-OPERATIVE, 2 x 450g BAGS	£0.98
▼	CARROTS MORRISONS, 1kg	£0.45
▲	PARSNIPS THE CO-OPERATIVE, 2 x 500g BAGS	£0.98
▲	CRANBERRY SAUCE ALDI, 200g	£0.65
▼	CHRISTMAS PUDDING ASDA, 2 x 454g	£1.96
▼	BRANDY BUTTER ALDI, 200g	£1.25
▲	MINCE PIES SAINSBURY'S, BASIC MINCE PUFFS x 8	£0.70
=	CHRISTMAS CAKE £3 ICELAND, LARGE ICED FRUIT BAR 800g	

TOTAL
£20.26

Turn the page for more time and money saving ideas ➔

FEATURE: SIMON COCKS, MEIKE BECK, SUZANNAH BUTCHER. PRICES CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS. *OUR BASKET COMPRISES 11 ITEMS FOR A CHRISTMAS DINNER FOR EIGHT: A WHOLE TURKEY, APPROXIMATELY 2.5KG POTATOES AND 800G EACH OF SPROUTS, CARROTS AND PARSNIPS; STUFFING MIX; CRANBERRY SAUCE; CHRISTMAS PUDDING; CHRISTMAS CAKE; MINCE PIES AND BRANDY BUTTER

Tips from the GH kitchen

(so you can spend less time in yours)

COOKING A TURKEY

◆ Take the turkey out of the fridge 1hr before roasting to allow it to come to room temperature.

◆ To roast it, rub skin with a little oil or butter, season and roast at 190°C (170°C fan) mark 5 for 30-35min per kg (per 2lb 3½oz).

◆ To check the turkey is cooked, insert a fork into the thickest part of the thigh – the juices should run golden and clear.

If there's any red tinge, keep cooking and check every 10-15min. A meat thermometer needs to read at least 72°C when inserted into the thickest part of breast.

◆ Always leave your bird to rest under foil before carving – at least 30min and up to 1½hr.

GLORIOUS ROASTIES

Crispy roast potatoes are reassuringly simple. Peel and cut them into even-sized chunks, put into a pan, cover with cold water, bring to the boil and simmer for 12min. Drain well and shake in a colander to roughen the edges.

Preheat a large roasting tin with about 6tbsp oil in 190°C (170°C fan) mark 5 oven. Roast the potatoes, turning occasionally, for about 1hr, until golden and crisp.



Tantalising turkey



Brilliant spuds



Amazing sprouts



SENSATIONAL STUFFING

- ◆ Avoid stuffing the central cavity of your bird, as this will prevent hot air circulating and cooking the bird efficiently.
- ◆ For a more meaty flavour, wrap uncooked stuffing balls with streaky bacon before cooking.

HOME-MADE GRAVY

While the turkey rests, use its tasty roasting juices to make gravy. Into the empty roasting tin over medium hob heat, whisk a couple of tablespoons plain flour for 1min. Gradually whisk in 450ml (15fl oz) hot water (or chicken stock from the storecupboard) and bubble for a few min. Add a dash of white wine or brandy, if you like, and simmer briefly.



SUPER SIDES

Roasted roots Save time and space and roast parsnips and carrots together. Peel and cut into similar-sized pieces, toss in 1tbsp oil (add some wholegrain mustard and runny honey if you have it in your storecupboard) and roast them at 190°C (170°C fan) mark 5 until tender and golden.

Sprouts Love them or loathe them, Brussels sprouts are a Christmas tradition. Contrary to Granny's advice, don't cut a cross into the stems of sprouts before cooking, as this will waterlog them. Simply peel off discoloured outer leaves and boil sprouts for 4-5min until tender. Jazz up cooked sprouts with flavoured butter, toasted nuts or crispy lardons.

PUDDING TIPS

Cook your pudding according to pack instructions, then invert it on to a serving plate or cake stand.

- ◆ For added drama, flambé your pudding. From your drinks cabinet, warm a ladleful of brandy in a small pan. Carefully light it and pour over hot pudding.
- ◆ Later on, crumble any leftover pudding, stir into chocolate ganache, then roll to make truffle balls – after-dinner delight!



CHRISTMAS CAKE

- ◆ For a homely touch, decorate it with a thick ribbon, or pipe on stars/icicles/snowflakes with thick glacé icing.
- ◆ Fry leftover cake slices in butter until golden, and serve with ice cream.

MINCE PIES

- ◆ To refresh mince pies, warm through in a 180°C (160°C fan) mark 4 oven for 5min before serving.
- ◆ Crumble leftover mince pies into ice cream for an instant dessert.
- ◆ Serve with brandy butter – add grated orange zest to the butter for a fresh twist. □



Something sweet



Merry Christmas

Eat, cheat and BE MERRY!



When catering for a crowd, sometimes all you can do is open a packet and take the credit! The GH Cookery Team hung up their aprons and sampled countless sweet and savoury bites to bring you the best for taste, price and presentation



DIM SUM SELECTION, £2.75 FOR 9 (210g), SAINSBURY'S TASTE THE DIFFERENCE

Impressive looking, with a nice mix of fillings that retain their freshness. Guests will love the zingy dipping sauce.



SUNDRIED TOMATO, FETA AND FIRE ROASTED RED PEPPER TARTLETS, £4 FOR 9 (198g), TESCO

A wonderful vegetarian option. Warm Mediterranean bites with a crisp red pastry, and not too heavy. Certain to impress!



TRAITEUR DE PARIS FROZEN MACARONS, £24.99 FOR 36 (375g), OCADO

Divided into smaller packets, these defrost in one hour, so are ideal for unexpected guests. Nice range of flavours with a crispy shell, chewy texture and generous filling.



LOBSTER MAC AND CHEESE, £10 FOR 10 (226g), MARKS & SPENCER

Delightfully mini but full of flavour. Nice addition of warm spice with a decent amount of lobster. Pasta al dente with a creamy sauce.



NO-G MINI CHEESE AND ONION PASTRYLESS QUICHES, £3.99 FOR 12 (180g), OCADO

A very tasty gluten-free option. Light, fluffy texture with no heavy pastry. Brown paper cases make them look home made!



LAMB KEBABS, £4 FOR 440g (SERVES 10), ASDA

Generous amount of meltingly tender meat that is easy to cook. Mini pittas make presentation very appealing. Great sauces mean these bites pack a punch.



SALTED CARAMEL BROWNIE BITES, £7 FOR 12 (190g), MARKS & SPENCER
Fudgy, rich brownies. Wonderful mix of textures with a decadent flavour. Pâtisserie-worthy presentation.

MINI BRITISH PIES, £2.99 FOR 12 ASSORTED (300g), ALDI SPECIALLY SELECTED
The beef filling is melt-in-the-mouth, and the chicken, leek and bacon pies are decadently creamy. Pastry tastes home-made and buttery.

MINI BRITISH QUICHES, £1.99 FOR 12 ASSORTED (216g), ALDI SPECIALLY SELECTED
Three pleasing flavours: Stilton and Broccoli, Quiche Lorraine, Goat's Cheese and Tomato. Short, crisp pastry.



ROAST PORK LOLLIPOPS, £3.50 FOR 10 (242g), SAINSBURY'S
Fun DIY canapé. Dip the herby, moist pork lollipops into the delicious apple sauce, then dunk in the crunchy crackling coating.



CHOCOLATE CHURROS, £2 FOR 12 (220g), TESCO
Crispy outsides with a doughy, chocolatey middle. Cooked from frozen, these impressed the team with their fresh, light texture. The cinnamon sugar makes them extra special.



MINI SEAFOOD SHELLS, £8 FOR 10 (225g), MARKS & SPENCER
Pretty presentation. Well-seasoned salmon mousse with large prawns and plenty of salmon. Tastes fresh and zesty.



BOURBON BBQ BEEF WAFFLES, £5 FOR 8 (210g), TESCO
On-trend, and they'll be the talking point at any party. Delicious, tender beef. Overall quite sweet but still well balanced. These look and taste indulgent.



SAUSAGE ROLL PINWHEELS, £2.50 FOR 6 (156g), THE CO-OPERATIVE
Well-seasoned meaty filling, with a satisfying pork flavour. Buttery, crisp pastry that isn't greasy. Pleasing change from the standard sausage roll, and easy to pass off as home made!



IRISH CREAM AND SALTED CARAMEL TARTS, £3.50 FOR 6 ASSORTED (180g), MORRISONS M SIGNATURE
Beautifully presented with a sparkly lustre. Perfect canapé size. Crisp pastry with velvety fillings – both were impressive.



SPICY BEEF AND PORK TACOS, £5.99 FOR 12 (176g), WAITROSE
A clever twist for a canapé party. Interestingly spiced. Try topping with guacamole or sour cream for a tempting, authentic finish.



HAGGIS, NEEPS AND TATTIES, £6 FOR 10 (320g), MARKS & SPENCER
A treat even for haggis-haters. All the right herbs and spices, wonderfully balanced flavours and textures, and the onion drizzle is delicious.



RASPBERRY CHEESECAKE BITES, £4 FOR 12 (300g), SAINSBURY'S
Creamy cheesecakes with an intense vanilla hit. Raspberry swirl was fresh and not too sweet. Pack is easy to remove – and hide! □



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THE LOWDOWN Sticky Toffee Pudding

Whip up this classic with our ultimate recipe, or try one of these top supermarket picks



50p*
per
serving

MAKE IT STICKY TOFFEE PUDDING

Takes about 1hr. Serves 8

Preheat oven to 180°C (160°C fan) mark 4. Grease and line the base and sides of an 18 x 25.5cm (7 x 10in) roasting tin with baking parchment. Put **225g (8oz) pitted dates** into a food processor and pour in **300ml (½ pint) just-boiled water**. Leave to soak for 5min. Meanwhile, in a large bowl beat together **75g (3oz) softened butter**, **200g (7oz) demerara sugar**, **225g (8oz) self-raising flour**, **2 medium eggs** and **2tbsp golden syrup** with an electric hand whisk until smooth. Whiz the date mixture to a purée, then pulse in **1tsp bicarbonate of soda**. Fold date purée into the batter until well combined. Transfer to the prepared tin and bake for 45-50min or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Meanwhile, make the toffee sauce: melt **75g (3oz) butter** in a medium pan. Add **75g (3oz) dark brown muscovado sugar**, **250ml (9fl oz) double cream** and **2tbsp golden syrup**. Bring to the boil, stirring often, and simmer for 3-5min until thickened. Serve warm cake in squares, drizzled generously with sauce (reheat if needed) – and ice cream, if you like!

Debatable dates

Aficionados hotly debate the origins of sticky toffee pudding, but it is agreed that Francis Coulson from the Lake District's Sharrow Bay Hotel popularised his 'Icky Sticky Toffee Sponge' in the 1970s.

Get ahead

Make 1 day ahead. Wrap cooled date cake (in tin) in clingfilm and store at room temperature. Cover sauce and chill. To serve, reheat cake in a 180°C (160°C fan) mark 4 oven for 12-15min to warm through. Reheat sauce until hot.

BUY IT

94p**
per
serving

We found shop-bought sticky toffee puddings varied greatly, but **Sainsbury's Taste the Difference Sticky Toffee Pudding** (£3.75 for 450g) stood out from the crowd: the sponge is moist and light with a natural fruity sweetness, and the thick sauce has a deep toffee flavour that complements the sponge. The whole-date decoration on top is a nice touch, and makes this pud look home-made. **Marks & Spencer Sticky Toffee Pudding** (£3.80 for 492g) also pleased our tasters as a less intense and family-friendly option, and the sauce had a delicious butterscotch flavour.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR WINNERS!

Small producers are the unsung heroes of British food, which is why the Cookery Team enjoyed shining the spotlight on many of them for our GH 2015 Food Awards. This year the team was wowed by the high standards...

BEST SMALL MEAT PRODUCER

◆ **Fosse Meadows Chicken** (fossemeadows.com). 'Five minutes into roasting, I could smell the quality of this slow grown, free range Cotswold White,' says Cookery Director Meike Beck. 'The flavour, care and ethics behind the farm make it worthy of this prize.'

BEST SMALL DAIRY PRODUCER

◆ **Rachel cheese** (from paxtonandwhitfield.co.uk). Somerset-based White Lake Cheese's Rachel is an outstanding goat's cheese. 'We loved its dense creaminess,' says Cookery Editor Suzannah Butcher. 'Its sweet subtlety would be at home on any cheeseboard.'

BEST SMALL CHOCOLATE PRODUCER

◆ **Choc on Choc** (choconchoc.co.uk). This family-run company based in Bath layers chocolate to create unique designs. 'The Belgian chocolate is delectable, and I'm astounded by their creativity,' says Elizabeth Hutchinson, Deputy Cookery Editor. □



Just sublime...
and so easy
to make



Served in 1939 Blind in 2004 Supported for life



My dad Cedric Hollands, Royal Navy veteran

My dad didn't know Blind Veterans UK could help him. Until someone told him, he didn't have a clue. That's why I want to tell you about my dad this Christmas. In case Blind Veterans UK can help someone you love too.

They were a ship full of boys. Lads of 15, 16 and 17 fighting the war at sea. Their ship was HMS Warspite. She fought so many battles they nicknamed her 'Grand Old Lady'. The worst was in Crete. **In one attack they lost 38 men, in clouds of black smoke and oily seawater.**

My dad has never forgotten the things he saw at war. He says he can still see them now, even though his eyesight has failed him since.

Age-related macular degeneration took his sight 11 years ago. He found himself not being able to drive, read or even watch TV. He lost all enjoyment in life. **Then he met someone who told him Blind Veterans UK might be able to help him.**

My dad was reluctant to make the call. 'They won't help me. It's not like I lost my sight in action', he said. But Mum encouraged him.

The lady he spoke to said **Blind Veterans UK helps anyone who has served, no matter what the cause of their sight loss.** They help people who did National Service too.

They gave him a special magnifier, which means he can read again. He can look at his post, manage his own affairs and keep up with what's going on in the world. All the things he lost when he lost his sight.

He's getting out and about a lot more too, on day trips and such with the other veterans. Our whole family is delighted. Not being able to drive hit my dad hard, he hated relying on the family to go places. Now he doesn't have to.

So this Christmas, just as someone told my dad, I want to tell you – if your dad or any veteran you know is losing their sight, or if you're having trouble yourself, **Blind Veterans UK can help.**

This Christmas my dad will have a lunch with the veterans, where he'll share a tale or two about the Warspite. He'll be able to read his Christmas cards and look at pictures of his many great grandchildren. None of this would be possible without the help he's received. **Give someone you love the best present of all this Christmas, change their life by calling the number below.**

Merry Christmas, Anne Bourne.

**If you know a veteran with sight loss,
Blind Veterans UK is ready to help.**

Call free on **0800 389 7979** or visit **noonealone.org.uk**



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TASTE ★ TEST

Magnums are having a moment – Champagne and Prosecco in 150cl bottles are now in most supermarkets. But which will make a big impression?

Champion Champagne OVERALL WINNER

Lanson Black Label Brut NV Champagne

75/100 Green acidity gives a fresh and lively quality, which is impressively full on the palate. A very good fizz with fruity, mellow tones.

£80; waitrosecellar.com

Pol Roger Reserve NV Champagne

74/100 With big flavours, this is rich and mature. Has an impeccable balance and good finish.

£81; marksandspencer.com

Laurent-Perrier Brut NV Champagne

74/100 Real balance and finesse – there's a full fruit flavour but it doesn't linger long in the mouth.

£80; majestic.co.uk

Prize-winning Prosecco OVERALL WINNER

San Leo Prosecco

77/100 Aromatic, fresh and fruity, this is a light Prosecco with gentle bubbles.

£20.99; waitrose.com

Marks & Spencer Prosecco

74/100 Crisp, with a light finish. Has a good weight on the palate, with flavours of green apple that fill the mouth. £20

Asda Fillipo Sansovino Prosecco

71/100 Well-balanced, with sweet, citrus notes. A good apple taste on the finish. £18

Q How long does it keep unopened?

'Like all good Champagne, magnums continue to improve with age and can easily be kept for five or 10 years,' says GH Wine Expert Richard Ehrlich. 'But this is assuming that they are stored in ideal conditions, with little variation in temperature and humidity over time, and away from both light and excessive movement. If you can't provide these, aim to drink it within a couple of years.'



HOW WE TESTED

Our panel, including GH Wine Expert Richard Ehrlich, blind-tasted 15 bottles, assessing their appearance, flavour and aroma. Visit goodhousekeeping.co.uk/institute for full results.

GHI TIPS

- Because of their size, magnums take 4-5hrs' chilling to reach ideal serving temperature
- No room in the fridge? Fill an ice bucket or sink with half water, half ice and chill it there
- Can't drink a full bottle? Save it for later with the Bubbly Bung Champagne Sealer, £4.97, Lakeland (lakeland.co.uk)
- Store bottles on their sides in a dark place, ideally at 8° to 10°C. □



The unexpected MED

There's sea, there's sunshine, there are cheap flights and you don't get jet-lag. What's more, says Travel Editor David Wickers, the Mediterranean still has a few surprises up its sleeve...

Access all areas:
Majorca's Sa Calobra
beach is a near-perfect
mix of sun, sea and
spectacular cliffs

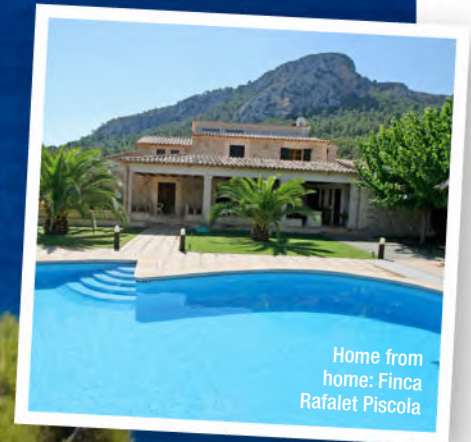
AN ISLAND RETREAT that's family friendly

Don't let tabloid tales of raucous goings on in Magaluf put you off going to Majorca. The southern sprawl of resorts covers just 10% of the coastline. My own favourite part of the island lies in and around the town of Pollença in the north.

Last Summer, we rented Finca Rafalet Piscola, a converted 18th-century farmhouse in the Colonya Valley. We spent lazy days by the pool, reading, playing games, barbecuing and eating on the long terrace table. Beyond the garden were olive, lemon and almond groves, their tranquillity accompanied by the bleatings of sheep and distant goat bells.

There were easy outings to the beach (five miles away) or the restaurants, cafés, shops and Sunday morning market in the delightful town of Pollença (two miles). There were easy big days out, too, with the villages of Valldemossa and Deià, one-time home of poet Robert Graves, both recommended.

Details From £921 for a week, flights and car hire extra, through Mallorca Farmhouses (mallorca.co.uk).



Home from home: Finca Rafalet Piscola



Literary gem: for years, Deià has been a draw for writers in search of inspiration



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Enjoy the grandeur
of Cephalonia's
magnificent
coastline

Spoil yourself in
idyllic surroundings
at Iris House



A HOLIDAY HOME where you're treated like royalty

Greece's austerity crisis may have made headlines, but setting foot in Cephalonia last Summer, I found a very different story.

Not only is it still possible to do Greece in style, but you can have one of the most luxurious escapes possible.

Cephalonia, the largest island in the Ionian, is famously the setting for Louis de Bernières' bestselling novel, and the subsequent Hollywood blockbuster, Captain Corelli's Mandolin. It is also where we found Iris House, near Trapezaki beach, owned by retired Greek diplomat Lysander Migliaressis.

We spent a week in his elegant and family-friendly four-bedroom villa with a pool, plasma TVs, air con, Wi-Fi and tons of outside space. But arguably the most lavish asset was the superstar in-house cook and housekeeper, Yolanda, who shopped for and prepared the most incredible meals. She also (for an extra fee) happily babysat our three-year-old, who was captivated by her warmth, charm and kindness.

If you do manage to tear yourself away from Iris (and Yolanda), there is much to explore on Cephalonia, including a Venetian fortress, an extraordinary underground lake, vineyards, grottos, pine-lined mountains, loggerhead turtles, monasteries and glorious stretches of deserted beach. *Jessica Callan*

Details Scott Williams (scottwilliams.co.uk) offers a week at Iris House in late June, from £5,320 including a full-time maid and concierge service for booking cars, boats, restaurants, spa treatments, etc. Or, with the services of Yolanda full time (available in July and August), from £7,952 per week.



And relax...
Neilson's Adakoy
Beachclub

Indulge in
a dizzying
array of
activities

ACTIVITY BREAKS with something for everyone

Beach clubs dotted around the Med offer a range of sporty activities, which is ideal when different family members have different passions. Neilson alone has 10 – six in Greece and four in Turkey. I spent a week at its club on Adakoy in the bay of Marmaris – an architectural gem set in a national park.

What did we do? What didn't we do! Such is the menu of activities that choosing is, well, hard work. Dinghy sailing or windsurfing, tennis or sea kayaking, paddle boarding or waterskiing, mountain biking or yachting... We had a go at most things, with tuition for all abilities from zero to hero. But there was no pressure to join in or compete. In fact,

Paddy the manager warned new arrivals not to go active crazy during the first few days or 'you probably will spend the rest of the week recuperating in the spa or indulging in advanced sunbathing'.

We went with big kids (the full-on action of Marmaris, 20 minutes away by boat, was an additional temptation), but all ages are catered for, with banded kids' clubs so families can choose to do everything together or everything apart. Neilson's motto, 'relax as hard as you like', really sums it all up. But be warned, its holidays are seriously addictive.

After a previous getaway, my eldest daughter went on to work for Neilson as a yachtie for a couple of seasons. **Details** A week at the Adakoy costs from £499pp, inclusive of most meals and activities but not flights, with Neilson (neilson.co.uk).

Dubrovnik lives up to the fantasy
INSET BELOW
Strolling through the streets of the city



A ROMANTIC GETAWAY that lives up to the hype

The Med as it once was... That's what the Croatian Tourist Board's slogan has promised, and it's pretty accurate! Driving along the one (and only) coast road on the way from the airport to our villa gave us a tantalising glimpse of what to expect.

Villa Mimosa, in Mali Ston on the unspoilt Peljesac Peninsula, is a traditional stone-built house within walking distance of several delightful restaurants (including Kapetanovna Kuca, which is run by a Croatian celebrity TV chef).

The peninsula is also home to one of the area's few sandy beaches at Prapratno Cove, some of the country's oldest vineyards and the Croatian version of the Great Wall of China – 14th-century fortifications that zigzag crazily up and down the pine-covered hills.

We combined relaxed poolside and beach time with more active days exploring. One was spent in Dubrovnik, Byron's 'Pearl of the Adriatic', walking along the ancient city walls. For Game of Thrones fans, it's familiar as King's Landing – with Renaissance palaces, stone houses and narrow alleys where you can follow in Cersei Lannister's footsteps.

Other days were spent island-hopping by ferry to the jet-set Mljet, the greenest of Croatia's 1,000-plus islands, and visiting beautiful Korcula, whose walled Venetian town is claimed to be the birthplace of fellow traveller Marco Polo. *Julie Powell*

Details Croatian Villa Holidays (croatianvillaholidays.com) features over 500 villas and apartments, and offers one week in Villa Mimosa (which sleeps up to eight) from £1,200. □

Hear Puccini's music performed in the grounds of his lakeside villa



Pose on Verona's Juliet Balcony

CULTURAL EVENTS where history comes to life

In Italy, Summer is the season not only for al fresco lunches, but also for al fresco opera, when some of the leading opera singers emerge from the shadows of La Scala and other European theatres to perform in wonderful historic settings.

In the 2,000-year-old amphitheatre in Verona, for example, audiences applaud prima donnas from the same seats that their ancestors once sat in to cheer their favourite gladiators. The stage alone covers half an acre. The atmosphere, illuminated by thousands of candles, is magical, the acoustics terrific and the whole

town takes on a festive atmosphere.

In the Marche region, other open-air festivals include performances at the Arena Sferisterio in Macerata – an elliptical sweep of neo-classical colonnaded balconies, open to the stars and originally built in the 1820s as a ball court. Meanwhile, at Torre del Lago, the Festival Puccini takes place in the grounds of the composer's old lakeside villa, close to the Tuscan coast and just 15 minutes from Lucca, his birthplace.

Details Martin Randall Travel (martinrandall.com) arranges tours to several festivals from around £2,000pp for four nights, including five-star hotels, three tickets, most meals and flights. If you want tickets only, e-mail info@liaisonsabroad.com.



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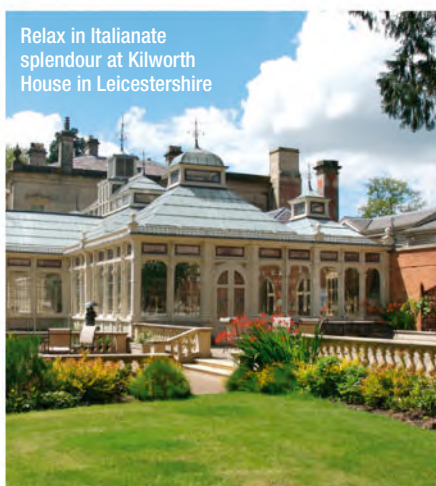
- ◆ The price is for two people sharing, and includes breakfast on both mornings and a three-course dinner with a glass of Champagne on the first evening.
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- ◆ This exclusive offer is open for stays from 2 January until 31 March 2016 – book now so you don't miss out.

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Seasonal style

Look great this month



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This month's top picks



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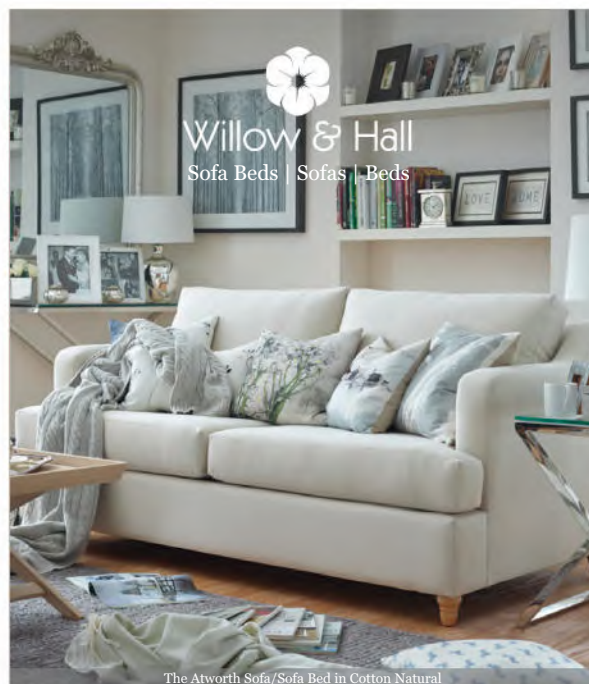
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Let's ring the changes and switch off our phones

Times have changed since 'phone accessory' meant a stool in a draughty hallway. Now the only person who calls Sandi on her landline is her mother

ILLUSTRATION **CLARE MACKIE**

Some years ago, I was at the home of an elderly relative when my mobile phone rang. I took the call, and when I hung up she asked who it was. I explained and then she enquired, 'How did they know you were here?'

As any of my kids and friends will testify, I am not a fan of the telephone. In fact, I would go so far as to confess that I am rather brusque in my replies. There are many times when it would be better if I didn't answer, but I am a slave to the sound of a ringtone. Even at the most inopportune moments I feel that I must press accept if someone rings. I take the call and often it is not convenient. I feel awkward because I don't feel I can say that, actually, I wasn't really available – so then I'm abrupt because I can't wait to get the person off the line, who by now wishes they hadn't bothered. How much more satisfying for everyone if I hadn't answered in the first place.

There is a song in Verdi's opera *Rigoletto* called *La Donna È Mobile*. It actually means *The Woman Is Fickle*, but I always think it suggests that the mobile is now queen. We are slaves to the wretched thing. We rarely leave home without it and it's not just phone calls. Did you know more people are now killed taking selfies on their mobiles than are attacked by sharks? And I don't think it's because sharks have calmed down.

When I was a child in the rural Danish village of Filskov, our telephone number was Filskov 7. That was it. The name of the village and the number 7. Anyone who wanted to speak to us had to go through a woman in the village with a switchboard in her front room who everyone knew listened in on every call. If you were trying to make an arrangement with someone that was dependent on the weather, she would chip in with her personal forecast. She was also known to tut at bad news and mutter

hurrah at good. Suffice to say that no one ever either lingered on the phone or met her eye in the street.

In England, my grandparents had a fantastically heavy telephone in the hall. For reasons my Danish father never understood, British homes are often built with what appear to be deliberate draughts. The wind whistled in under the front door where a small telephone table stood with an uncomfortable stool where one could perch in the breeze to take the call. Fear of the flu meant that no one ever spoke for long. I liked that. It meant that all communication was to the point, so that you could replace the receiver quickly and rush back to the three-bar electric fire in the sitting room.

Now the mobile phone is supreme. In fact, there are suggestions that the landline is dying a death (I know this because someone texted me about it). Mobile phone companies will tell you that lots of people now not only ignore their home phone when it rings, they also have no idea what their own number is. No one should feel bad about this. The genius Albert

Einstein said he never learnt anything that could be looked up in less than two minutes, and that included his own phone number. I like to think I follow in his footsteps by having no idea what my number is, but the truth is that I don't need to know it as I never give it out to anyone. I realised the other day that only my mother has my landline number, which means it's turned into a sort of hotline. It's like the Batphone ringing in Batman's cave. If it rings I pretty much know who it is.

Anyway, I've had a thought. Why don't we have one glorious Good Housekeeping sort of day where we all switch off our mobiles? We could all take the money we save and give it to charity. A sort of 'I am being silent for the [cause of my choosing]' campaign. We could take the time to write a poem, send a card to a friend or a love letter to... well, someone appropriate (I'm not trying to cause trouble here). So let's all shut up for something we care about and then... Oh sorry, I've got to go. The landline is ringing. I shan't need Caller ID: I'm either going to say, 'You've got the wrong number' or 'Hello, Mum'. □

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